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GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT:—

A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.

DEAN OF ELY

HAGGAI AND  
ZECHARIAH

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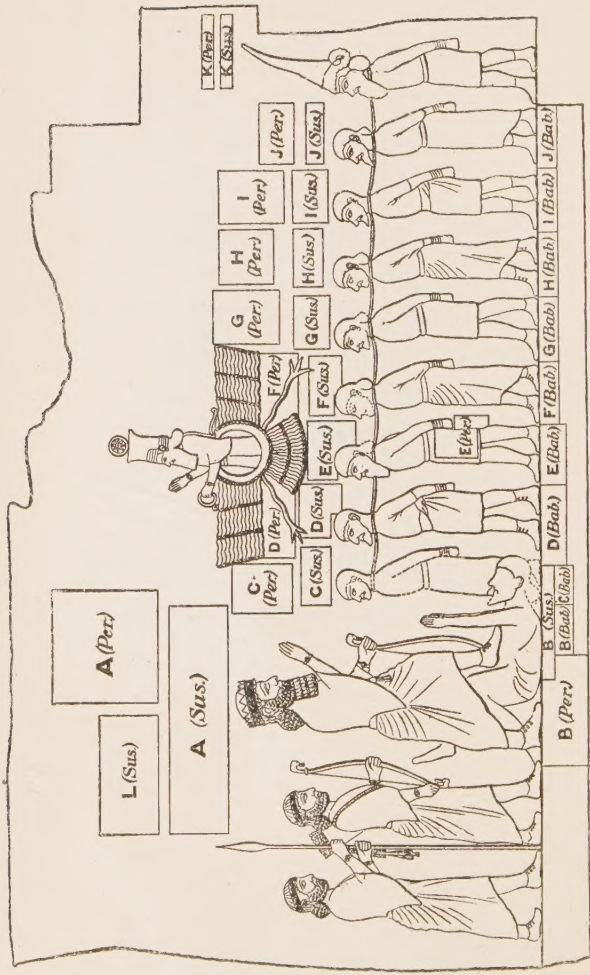
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The Triumph of Darius over his enemies "by the grace of Auramazda," from the Behistun inscription (see Introduction to Haggai, § 5).

Auramazda is represented aloft in the centre of the picture, and descriptive labels in different languages are placed above and below the figures.

# HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH

With Notes and Introduction

by

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Fellow of Peterhouse, Hulsean Professor of Divinity

Cambridge:  
at the University Press

1917



# PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.





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The Triumph of Darius . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
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## INTRODUCTION TO HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH

### § 1. THE POSITION OF THE BOOKS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The Twelve Minor Prophets are treated in the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, and the Peshitta as one book subdivided into twelve. So St Jerome (*in xii Prophetas praeformatio*) tells Paula and Eustochium "unum librum esse duodecim Prophetarum." Accordingly in Hebrew Bibles the Masoretic statement of the number of verses (1050) and of *Sēdārīm*<sup>1</sup> (21) is made summarily for all twelve prophets at the end of Malachi, just as the corresponding statement is made for the whole of the Pentateuch at the end of Deuteronomy.

The title given in Hebrew MSS is *Sēpher trē 'āsar*, "Book of the Twelve." This title is probably earlier than the beginning of the Christian era, for the son of Sirach (*fl. circ.* 190—170 B.C.) after mentioning Jeremiah and Ezekiel among the worthies of Israel proceeds immediately to mention "the twelve prophets" (Ecclus. xlix. 10, both Heb. and Greek texts). Similarly in lists of the books of the Old Testament given by the Christian Fathers we find such entries as τῶν δώδεκα προφητῶν μία βιβλος, "Of the Twelve Prophets one book" (Cyril of Jerusalem, *circ.* 348 A.D.), and οἱ δώδεκα [προφήται] εἰς ἓν βιβλίον ἀριθμούμενοι, "The Twelve Prophets numbered as one book" (Athanasius, *Festal Letter* of 367 A.D.).

The title "Minor Prophets" (*Petits Prophètes, Kleinen Propheten*) is to be regarded only as a popular and comparatively modern name.

<sup>1</sup> For the divisions of the text called *Sēdārīm* see C. D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, pp. 32—65.

In this book of the Twelve Prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi occupy respectively the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth places both in the Hebrew Bible and in the ancient versions. It should be noted that the popular saying that the Old Testament ends "with a curse" (Mal. iv. 6) is true of the English Bible, but not of the Hebrew, nor of the old versions. In the Hebrew the Prophets precede the Hagiographa, in LXX the book of the Twelve Prophets precedes Isaiah, in the Peshitta it comes between Ezekiel and Daniel (so the best MSS), in the Latin Vulgate it is immediately followed by I II Maccabees, which are treated as Canonical.

## § 2. CONTENTS OF (a) HAGGAI; (b) ZECHARIAH.

### (a) *Haggai*.

The book of Haggai is in the main prophetic in character, but it contains an element of narrative, as the following analysis shows.

Haggai i. 1. Superscription of the book giving the Prophet's name together with the date and destination of the prophecy following.

2—11. The great Remonstrance. The Jews, Haggai says, are caring for their own houses and fields and are neglecting to build with timber the house of the LORD. The curse of drought is upon them because of this neglect.

12—15. Narrative passage describing the result of the Prophet's appeal. The Jews led by Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the priest feared, and encouraged by a fresh message from JEHOVAH came and did work in the house of JEHOVAH.

ii. 1. Superscription dating the prophetic passage which follows about seven weeks' after its predecessor.

2—9. Promises for the future; "the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former" (v. 7).

10. Superscription dating the prophetic passage which follows about nine weeks after its predecessor.

11—19. A stern rebuke for past neglect of the Temple

passing into a promise of blessing for the future because the people have now begun again to build

20. Superscription assigning to the following prophecy the same date as its predecessor.

21—23. A promise of perfect safety for Zerubbabel in the approaching catastrophe when "the throne of kingdoms" shall be overturned.

(b) *Zechariah.*

Like the book of Isaiah, the book of Zechariah seems naturally to fall into two halves. The first half consisting of chaps. i.—viii. contains the report of the Prophet's own teaching. Chaps. ix.—xiv. differ much both in style and standpoint from the rest and are probably due to a younger contemporary and disciple of Zechariah. The supposed indications of a date later by several centuries to which some scholars have called attention are certainly untrustworthy (see § 3). The contents of the book may be analysed as follows.

Zechariah i. 1. Superscription giving the date and the Prophet's name and genealogy. (The superscription to Haggai should be compared.)

2—6. Zechariah appeals to the Jews to repent and receive the word of JEHOVAH, and not to be as their fathers who had not hearkened to the former prophets.

7. Superscription giving the date of Zechariah's first vision or (possibly) of the series of eight visions.

8—12. A VISION (I) of the Angel of JEHOVAH pleading for Jerusalem.

13—17. JEHOVAH grants the Prophet two "comfortable words" one for Jerusalem and the other for the cities of Judah.

18—21. A VISION (II) of deliverance by the hand of smiths (carpenters) from oppression by the "horns."

ii. 1—5. A VISION (III) of a measuring line followed by a promise that the new Jerusalem shall need no walls.

6—9. JEHOVAH's invitation to the exiles in Babylon to return trusting in His protection by the way.

10—13. JEHOVAH's promise of the future destiny of



Jerusalem as the city of JEHOVAH for the nations as well as for Judah.

iii. 1—9 *a* (as far as *LORD of hosts*). A VISION (IV) of the cleansing of the High Priest.

9 *b*, 10. Assurance of the punishment of Judah's oppressors, and promise of peace to Judah.

vi. 1—6 *a* (ending, *and he spake unto me, saying*) with 10 *b*—14 (beginning, *These seven are the eyes of the LORD*). VISION (V) of two olive trees fed with oil from a golden candlestick, together with the explanation of the vision.

6 *b*—10 *a* (beginning, *This is the word*, and ending, *in the hand of Zerubbabel*). The word of JEHOVAH to Zerubbabel promising that he shall complete the rebuilding of the Temple.

v. 1—4. VISION (VI) of a flying roll which brings punishment on guilty households.

5—11. VISION (VII) of a flying ephah, bearing away guilt of the people. (Probably iii. 9 *b*, 10—beginning, *and I will remove*—should follow v. 11.)

vi. 1—8. VISION (VIII) of the four chariots. JEHOVAH's spirit "quieted."

9—15. The gifts brought from Babylon used by Zechariah to convey a promise of fresh help for the completion of the Temple.

vii. 1—7. Superscription giving the date of the following prophecy, and the circumstances under which it was delivered. A question addressed to the priests (and prophets) as to fasting. The Prophet answers that their fasting and their feasting have no moral value.

8—14. JEHOVAH desires mercy and justice, and for lack of these Judah was laid waste.

viii. 1. Superscription (without date).

2—8. Peace and prosperity promised to Jerusalem.

9—17. A covenant. God's favour shall now be in proportion to his former chastisement. The people on their part shall observe truth, justice, and sincerity.

18. Superscription (without date) to two Words of the LORD which follow.

19—23. Two promises. Fasting shall be turned into

feasts. Strong nations shall join themselves to Judah in order to worship JEHOVAH in Jerusalem.

(At this point there is a change affecting both the style and the subject-matter of the book.)

*Supplement to the book of Zechariah.*

ix. 1 a. Superscription (without date) "The Burden of the Word of JEHOVAH."

1 b—8. Judgement on Tyre and the Philistine cities.

9, 10. Zion to receive a "meek" (Heb. *'āni*) and peaceful king, who has been "saved" from his enemies.

11—17. Promise of a return of exiles to Jerusalem and of the future glory of the city.

x. 1, 2. The Prophet warns his hearers to seek blessing ("rain") from JEHOVAH, and not from *tērāphim*, nor from diviners.

3—12. JEHOVAH will raise up leaders of every rank to win victory and bring back the exiles of Judah and Ephraim from Egypt and Assyria by a new Exodus. But first the present leaders must be punished.

xi. 1—3. The visitation of Judah.

4—14. The rejection by the people of the shepherd appointed by JEHOVAH.

15—17. The worthless shepherd appointed over the people as a punishment.

xii. 1—9. The great deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem from the invasion of many nations.

10—14. The great day of humiliation and repentance for the whole people of Judah.

xiii. 1—6 (cp. x. 1, 2). False prophecy and divination will be cleansed out of the land.

7—9. A terrible trial announced. The ruler will be cut off and only a third of the people will pass safely through the ordeal.

xiv. The new Jerusalem delivered from her enemies, and set up on high to be a centre of the worship of JEHOVAH for all the nations.

## § 3. THE RELATION OF ZECH. ix.—xiv. TO ZECH. i.—viii.

It is easy to assign the prophecies contained in the first half of Zechariah (chs. i.—viii.) to the period to which they belong. The evidence is partly direct and partly indirect. The eight chapters are certainly from one hand, and the prophet is definitely named as Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo. He can be none other than the Zechariah “son of Iddo” who is mentioned in Ezra v. 1, 2; vi. 13, 14, as one of the two prophets who encouraged the Jews to rebuild the Temple in the days of Darius. To make the matter certain there are three passages in Zech. i.—viii. which are dated in the second and fourth years of Darius. There is no reasonable doubt that the king meant is Darius Hystaspis (521—485 B.C.).

With this date agree the references in the text to the circumstances of Judah and Jerusalem. JEHOVAH has had indignation against Jerusalem and the neighbouring cities for “seventy years” (i. 12), i.e. ever since 597 B.C., when the temple vessels were carried to Babylon and Jehoiachin was led captive (2 Kings xxiv. 12, 13), or since 586 B.C., when the Temple was destroyed, and the dynasty of the house of David came to an end (2 Kings xxv. 1—10). (“Seventy” is a round number.) So too the Temple was lying waste (i. 16; *al.*). Jerusalem’s walls needed rebuilding (ii. 2, 4) and the city itself was almost empty of inhabitants (viii. 4, 5). Again the Babylonian captivity was still recent and was not yet at an end (ii. 7). Finally Zerubbabel was the civil governor of Judah, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak was the high priest. These two persons are to be identified with the two leaders mentioned in Ezra v. 2. The indications in short show quite clearly that Zech. i.—viii. belongs as a whole to the period 520—518 B.C., the second to the fourth year of Darius Hystaspis.

A striking literary feature of these chapters is the introduction of the interpreting angel, who explains the visions which are shown to the prophet. The same figure appears in the book of Daniel (vii. 16; viii. 16; ix. 21 ff.) and in the Revelation of St John (xvii. 1 ff.; xxi. 9), but

usually in the prophets of the Old Testament revelation is given by the word of JEHOVAH, without any intermediary.

The second half of Zechariah consists of chs. ix.—xiv. of the book. It is distinguished by several features from the earlier half. The angel-interpreter of visions disappears, the name of Zechariah the prophet is found no longer, no passage is dated by the year of Darius, Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua are not mentioned at all. On the other hand some new subjects are introduced, e.g. Tyre and the Philistines are threatened with punishment (ix. 1—6); the Governors of Judah are denounced (xi. 4, 5; 8; 15—17); and also the Diviners and Prophets (x. 2; xiii. 2—6); a capture of Jerusalem by the Gentiles and her subsequent deliverance are described (xii. 2 ff.; xiv. 1—7). Lastly, reference is made to "the sons of *Javan*" (τὰ τέκνα τῶν Ἑλλήνων, "the children of the Greeks," LXX); "I will stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece" (ix. 13, R.V.)

This second half of the book is divided into two sections: (1) chs. ix.—xi.; (2) chs. xii.—xiv. Each section begins with the heading, "The burden of the word of JEHOVAH." The two are kindred in subject and supplementary to one another in contents. Chs. ix.—xi. describe the Restoration of the people of Judah (and Ephraim); chs. xii.—xiv. the Restoration of Jerusalem and her advancement to be the Sanctuary not of Israel only but also of all the nations.

The reference to the sons of *Javan* (pronounced *Yāvān*) has given occasion to a rash conclusion as to the date of an important subsection of the second half of Zechariah. Thus Nowack writes, "Ch. ix. 13, where the *Bēnē Jāvān* (sons of Javan), are designated as the chief enemy (*sic!*) of the people [of JEHOVAH], is decisive for fixing the time at which these chapters (chs. ix., x. 3—xi. 3) originated in the very form in which they lie before us" (*Kleinen Propheten*, p. 350). He proceeds to explain that the time must be subsequent to the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great (332 B.C.).

Marti (*Dodekapropheton*, pp. 427, 430) goes a step further

in definite pronouncement. *Javan* (he asserts) is a designation of the Seleucid power, for ch. ix. 1, 2 "describe the kingdom of the house of Seleucus," and so the prophecy comes from 197—142 B.C., when Palestine was subject to the Syro-Greeks. Duhm again (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1911, p. 190), while declaring that the words, "against thy sons, O *Javan*," are impossible "on grounds of style" and so must be a gloss, also maintains that the passage refers to the Seleucid power.

In any case the conclusion of Nowack and Marti is rash; the occurrence of the name *Javan* is of itself no help whatever towards fixing the date of an anonymous and undated passage. If we omit Ezek. xxvii. 19 (the reading of which is uncertain) we find *Javan* in seven other passages of the O.T. In *none* of these does the name connote the Syro-Greeks (so well known to the later Jews), but rather some remote little known people. Thus in Gen. x. 2 (= 1 Chron. i. 5); Ezek. xxvii. 13; Is. lxvi. 19; Joel iii. (iv) 6 *Javan* is associated with Madai (the Medes), with Tubal and Meshech, with Tubal and the isles of the sea, or when used alone it suggests the notion of distance. It is not till we reach the latter half of the book of Daniel, which belongs most probably to the Maccabean age, that the name *Javan* begins to connote a power with which the Biblical writers were familiar. Then we find, "King of *Javan*" (Dan. viii. 21), "prince of *Javan*" (Dan. x. 20), "kingdom of *Javan*" (Dan. xi. 2). But even here *Javan* stands for the Macedonians, who overthrew the Persian power, and not for the house of Seleucus. The great oppressor of Israel is called on the contrary simply "the king of the north" (Dan. xi. 15, 40). In short it must be said that there is nothing in the rest of the O.T. to warrant us in giving to *Javan* in Zech. ix. 13 the sense of the Syro-Grecian power.

If appeal be made to 1 Macc. viii. 18, where *the kingdom of the Greeks* (perhaps *malchūth Jāvān* in the lost Heb. original of the book) is described as enslaving Israel, the answer is that the two phrases, *malchūth Jāvān* and *Bēnē Jāvān* differ wholly in the historical background which they respectively suggest. *Kingdom of Javan* may suggest the Macedonian power and its successor (in



Syria) the Seleucid dynasty (1 Macc. i. 10); *Sons of Javan* (Zech. ix. 13) on the contrary suggests an age in which *Javan* (the Greeks) was only an ethnological term for a disunited and widely dispersed race. *Kingdom of Javan* speaks at the earliest of the latter half of the fourth century B.C., while *Sons of Javan* carries us back even into pre-historic times. But it is enough here to remark how natural it is that the name of *Javan* should be heard in Palestine just after the Ionians had flung themselves upon the western border of the Persian empire, had given Sardis to the flames, and "sing'd the beard" of the terrible Darius (Herod. v. 97 ft.)<sup>1</sup>. Generally in 1 Maccabees the oppressing power is called "Antiochus," or "the king," or "the power (or powers, *δυνάμεις*) of Syria," or "the nations" ("the heathen," *gōyīm*, Heb.). (2 Maccabees being originally a Greek, not a Hebrew book, does not come under consideration.)

Further, a study of the clause in which *Javan* occurs suggests that the name is used in the same vague sense as in Genesis, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Joel. The language of vv. 11—16 is generalized. The main thought of it (v. 11) is the deliverance of the exiles of Judah. Some of these have been removed to distant lands of the West (Isa. lxvi. 19). But JEHOVAH declares, "I have bent Judah for me, I have drawn Ephraim as a bow with my full strength, and I will shoot thy sons, O Zion (as arrows), against thy sons, O Javan!" JEHOVAH's arrows will overtake the slave-dealing Greeks of the Mediterranean, and even from beyond the sea he will deliver his exiles. There is nothing to suggest that the *Javan* of Zech. ix. 13 is to be distinguished from the *Javan* of Gen. x. 2 or Ezek. xxvii. 13, i.e. from the Mediterranean Greeks of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. The conquests of Alexander in the fourth century B.C. no doubt made *Javan* better known to the Jews, but the slight passing reference in Zech. ix. 13 is more reasonably ascribed to a writer of the sixth or fifth than to one of the fourth or second century.

<sup>1</sup> Etymologically *Javan* and *Iōves* (*Iafores*), "Ionians," are closely akin.

If the use of the phrase, *thy sons, O Javan*, in its context be not decisive in favour of Nowack's view, certainly no other "decisive" detail is to be cited from chs. ix.—xiv. There is nothing characteristic of the Grecian period of Jewish history (332—142 B.C.) in the references to Hamath and Damascus, to Tyre and Zidon, and to the Philistine cities. All these places were representative of hostility and of heathenism (ix. 1—7) in both early and late times of Israel's history. Hadrach (probably the Hatarika of Assyrian inscriptions of the eighth century B.C.) tells no tale, even if it be part of Coele-Syria (1 Macc. x. 69). It gives no definite indication of date. The attempt to read unmistakable references to the Seleucid power and the Maccabean period into ix. 1—10 must be pronounced to fail in spite of Marti's confident language (*Dodekapropheton*, pp. 429, 430).

Indications of date in ix.—xiv. are in fact indistinct. Perhaps the clearest are to be found in the references to Jerusalem. The city seems to have been lifted from her lowest depths, but she is still in low estate. Jerusalem, a mere desolation in chs. i., ii., has become (in some sense) a city again in chs. xii.—xiv. It is a reasonable supposition that the rebuilding of the Temple (516 B.C.) was followed by some degree of prosperity, which the generation of Haggai and Zechariah lived to see. Darius reigned thirty-six years, and though it is perhaps morally impossible that chs. ix.—xiv. could have been composed (like chs. i.—viii.) in the early years of his reign, there is nothing to forbid us to assign them to his later years.

Other indications of date, worthy of consideration, are to be found in the many points of contact between i.—viii. and ix.—xiv. That the two halves of the book proceed from the same author is most unlikely, but that the second followed the first after only a short interval of time is on the contrary extremely probable. The improvement in the condition of Jerusalem has already been noticed. Another point of connexion is to be found in the allusions to Ephraim (Israel), the northern tribes. In both halves of *Zechariah* there is a sympathetic tone towards Ephraim (Israel). In both halves again the house of David holds a prominent

place. In both the restoration of the line of kings is considered desirable and perhaps inevitable. But sympathy for Ephraim combined with regard for the house of David suggests a date earlier than Nehemiah and near (perhaps) to the date of Zerubbabel. Certainly we have no dated evidence to show that these two features lasted side by side into the Greek period<sup>1</sup>.

Marti's proposal of a Maccabean date for these chapters is open to very grave objections. One lies in the references which the author makes to David and his house. He reveals his conviction that the royal house has sinned and needs cleansing but further he looks forward hopefully to their repentance and to their consequent purification. Yet "David" is still a great name, and a watchword for Judah (Zech. xii. 7, 8, 10, 12; xiii. 1). But we do not find it so in books proceeding from the Maccabean era. The two books of Maccabees ignore David and his house; for all that can be learnt to the contrary from them, royalty has passed away from the tribe of Judah; the men "by whose hand deliverance was given unto Israel" (1 Macc. v. 62) are the sons of Mattathias the priest. So again the book of Daniel (generally accepted as a Maccabean work, and full of the hope of redemption) does not connect this hope with the house of David; but "the saints of the Most High" (so the promise is generalized) "shall receive the kingdom" (Dan. vii. 18).

Moreover the general character of the language of Zech. ix.—xiv. tells against Marti's view. It is early rather than late. So much is this the case that sound Hebrew scholars like Ewald actually attributed more than half this passage (chs. ix.—xi.; xiii. 7—9) without misgiving to a pre-Captivity date. It is true that a few words which are Aramaic rather than Hebrew are found in chs. ix.—xiv. But the occurrence of Aramaic words is no trustworthy indication of a very late date. Even before the fall of Jerusalem there were influences at work, mighty influences

<sup>1</sup> The perfunctory reference to the house of David in the Heb. text of Eccles. (Ben-Sira), li. 12 c (8) cannot count for much, while the reference to the Samaritans ("Sichem") in l. 26 is simply hostile.

of Trade and War, to introduce them into Hebrew. And especially it must be remembered that occasional Aramaisms prove nothing, for they may be due to scribes and not to authors.

Finally, some attention must be paid to the position of these chapters in the order of the writings of the Minor Prophets. The two sections are placed immediately after Zechariah (i.—viii.) and immediately before Malachi. The two sections together with Malachi form a group of *three* each beginning with the heading, "The burden (or "oracle" Heb. *massā*) of the word of JEHOVAH" (LXX, *λῆμμα λόγου Κυρίου*). This arrangement is found in LXX as well as in M.T., and so it appears as if an early editor (earlier than the final redactor of the book of the XII Prophets) had ranged Zech. ix.—xiv. with Malachi. But since the book of Malachi is usually assigned to a contemporary of Nehemiah we are again pointed to some such period as the later years of Darius Hystaspis for the date of Zech. ix.—xiv.

But though the two halves of the book of Zechariah appear to be of different authorship, and to be separated in time by perhaps half a generation, they have nevertheless a close bond of union in the common standpoint and the common aim of their authors. The two prophets might be called respectively "Zechariah the Prophet and Zechariah the Disciple." Zechariah, the author of chs. i.—viii., is a prophet-sage, a man of long memory, who never forgets his country's past history. Of that history two great features are ever before him. The later days of the kingdom of Judah were filled with injustice and oppression. Prophets were raised up to give warning of the horrible punishment which must overtake the offenders. But no heed was paid to any warning. Then the avengers came. "They laid the land of desire desolate." The LORD was wroth with Jerusalem and the cities of Judah for "three-score and ten years." Judah was scattered "so that no man did lift up his head" (i. 12, 21; vii. 14).

This appalling disaster made Zechariah a prophet and kept him to his work of prophesying. He could never forget the blow which had fallen on his people, for many

of its results remained plainly visible to him and to his contemporaries. On the other hand the memory of happier days was not dead. Zechariah looked back to a time when "Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity and her daughter cities with her, and the South and the Shephelah ("the lowland") were inhabited" (vii. 7). As to the cause of this great reverse of fortune the Prophet had no doubt whatever. His people had offended JEHOVAH by the commonplace sins of injustice and oppression; they had been warned by prophets to repent, but had turned a deaf ear; finally when no other remedy remained JEHOVAH sent upon them an overwhelming calamity. Many of the results of this punishment remained to Zechariah's own day.

Thus the Prophet's message was ready-made for him. The desolation which he saw around him supplied him with an inexhaustible text. His prophecies took the form sometimes of a warning against provoking a repetition of the great disaster, sometimes of encouragement to rebuild and to restore according to the will of God. But the thought that the utter overthrow of Judah and Jerusalem was a Divine judgement, a true "Day of JEHOVAH," is never far from Zechariah's thoughts.

Zechariah the Disciple, i.e. the author of Zech. ix.—xiv., delivers the same general message as Zechariah the Prophet only under different forms. His visions are not the simple visions of the night like those of chs. i. 7—vi. 8, but apocalypses. He starts (like his predecessor) with the great disaster, but he takes his standpoint still further back in the past, so that he sees the fall of Jerusalem as still in the future. Thus he is able to view this great episode of Jewish history as working out from the beginning under the providence of JEHOVAH. In JEHOVAH's name he formally predicts a catastrophe which has already happened, in order that he may be able to show it the more vividly in its whole context as belonging to the course of Divine government. He himself witnessed the sequel, and he desired that his contemporaries should see the further sequel, and indeed all the Past, Present, and Future, as controlled by the hand of God. The younger Zechariah agrees with the elder in the

conclusion that as the great disaster happened by God's providence, so all future developments are subject to Him.

The fact that the judgement was past when the apocalyptic Prophet delivered his prophecy supplies the explanation of the extreme brevity of the description of this judgement in xii. 2 and xiv. 1, 2. He passes on quickly to the consideration of the present condition of his people: how the threatenings of the nations are to be met; how Judah is to be purified and restored. His problems are similar to those which Zechariah himself faced in i. 18—21; v. 1—11; *al.* The cleansing and preservation of his people and the full restoration of Jerusalem to be the city of JEHOVAH and the religious capital of all the nations are the true subjects of the Apocalypticist's pictures.

His prophecy is a picture or series of pictures of the allegorical kind: the details he gives are chiefly valuable as artistic touches not as literal representations. In manner Zechariah the disciple differs from Zechariah the prophet as a picture-in-words differs from the record of a vision, but in matter the two agree. Both hold up the Jerusalem of the Future as the ideal to be grasped by the faith of the men of the Present. They both "believe in the (Jewish) Church."

In conclusion it may be said that the two halves of the book of Zechariah are connected much more closely both in time and in subject than the two halves of Isaiah. Zech. ix.—xiv. is definitely the sequel of Zech. i.—viii. There is no such relation between Isa. xl.—lxvi. and Isa. i.—xxxix. Deutero-Isaiah was separated in time from Isaiah by some 150 years, and during this period the whole condition of the Chosen People was utterly changed. The author of Zech. ix.—xiv. may on the contrary have been the personal disciple of the prophet Zechariah, and his immediate successor in the office. Therefore the title "Deutero-Zechariah" which some<sup>1</sup> use suggests a misleading analogy, and should be avoided.

<sup>1</sup> B. Stade, *Deuteriozacharja*, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1881—2; and B. Duhm, *Deuterosacharja*, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1911.



#### § 4. THE TEACHING OF ZECHARIAH AND ITS PRESUPPOSITIONS.

The book of Zechariah might almost be described as a compendium of Old Testament Religion, or at least of Prophetical Religion. In it is seen Judaism almost at its highest, standing ready to serve as an Introduction to Christianity.

Not that even this short book is perfectly homogeneous in the religious ideas which underlie it. Rather it illustrates the truth of the statement with which the Epistle to the Hebrews opens, that God spake of old "by divers portions and in divers manners." The first portion of Zechariah (chs. i.—viii.) differs somewhat from the second (chs. ix.—xiv.) in the form of its religious teaching. This first portion is here first considered. The prophetic "Creed" which can be reconstructed from it is remarkably full; it may be stated under the following heads.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF THE NATURE OF GOD HELD BY ZECHARIAH. Zechariah is not a theologian, but a prophet; his function is to warn and to encourage; his sphere is practical religion. But his addresses to the people are based on certain beliefs as to the nature and the working of the God in whose name he speaks. What then, we may ask, were these beliefs?

But first it must be noted that the beliefs are convictions. The Prophet speaks as a messenger who knows well from whom he comes. JEHOVAH has sent him. And if any had challenged Zechariah with Pharaoh's question, *Who is JEHOVAH* (Exod. v 2), the Prophet would have been ready with an answer. JEHOVAH was He who had sent to Judah the earlier prophets with warnings which had been abundantly justified by the events of the Captivity (Zech. i. 1—6). Zechariah is so strongly possessed with consciousness of the God of Israel, that he is almost unconscious in his confession of Him. All his teaching is based on the conviction that there is a God who watched over Israel in the past, and watches still to chastise or to bless according to Israel's need.

In the three opening verses (*vv.* 2—4; *v.* 1 contains the Superscription only) Zechariah uses the name JEHOVAH no fewer than six times. This emphatic use is of course significant; the Prophet speaks as a restorer of old ways; he seeks to bring his people back to a more earnest loyalty to the God whom they know. He makes no vague references (after the manner of Greek moralists) to "the gods" or "the Divinity," but he recalls his people to their duty to JEHOVAH their God and the God of their fathers. For Zechariah and the prophets there is no unknown God; JEHOVAH is a person and known through the history of Israel.

But Zechariah does not think of JEHOVAH *merely* as the national God. Had this been the case he would not have felt the need of using any other name beside JEHOVAH, the "proper" name (as it may be called) of Israel's God. But in fact a double name JEHOVAH-Zebaoth ("the LORD of hosts," E.V.) is constantly in the mouth of both Haggai and Zechariah; cp. Hag. i. 2, note; Zech. xiv. 9, note. In this name two conceptions of God are united. As peculiarly the God of Israel He is called JEHOVAH; as filling all the Universe and possessing all the power and authority ascribed by the heathen to the heavenly bodies he is styled *Zēbāōth*<sup>1</sup>. The LXX perceiving this have rightly rendered *Zēbāōth* by παντοκράτωρ, "Ruler of all things." This rule, Zechariah teaches, is actively exercised. The chariots of JEHOVAH go through the whole earth, like the messengers of a king, and the LORD Himself decides the fate both of Jerusalem and of the nations which oppress her.

Further, when Zechariah describes JEHOVAH as acting specially on behalf of his people, he sometimes veils his language by speaking of the agent as the Angel of JEHOVAH. This Angel of JEHOVAH is no angel in the ordinary sense,

<sup>1</sup> So when Zechariah ascribes to JEHOVAH "seven eyes" it is most probable that he is implicitly claiming for the one true God the seven-fold power ascribed by the Babylonians to the Pleiades (cp. Job xxxviii 31) and also to the "planets" as known to them (i.e. the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn). On the planets and the connexion of the number "seven" see H. Zimmern in E. Schrader, *die Keilinschriften*, pages 620 ff.



but he is JEHOVAH Himself "present in definite time and particular place<sup>1</sup>." Yet separate rôles are ascribed to JEHOVAH and His Angel in Zechariah. Thus in Zech. i. 12 the Angel of JEHOVAH addresses JEHOVAH in intercessory prayer for Jerusalem, and in Zech. iii. 6, 7 the Angel introduces his promise to the high priest with the formula, "Thus saith JEHOVAH." Thus the Angel of JEHOVAH acts as a kind of Divine mediator for his people with JEHOVAH.

This subtle distinction is carried further by later Jewish thought in the Midrash<sup>2</sup> and the Targum, in which the Quality of Justice (Heb. *middath haddîn*) is distinguished from the Quality of Mercy (Heb. *middath rahāmîm*), and both are personified. With the latter we may certainly compare the Angel of JEHOVAH who pleads for mercy on Jerusalem.

Very important is Zechariah's teaching as to the spirit of God. The "spirit" represents in the Prophet's teaching the Divine energy which brings great things to pass. It is not personified. Zechariah contemplates the tremendous material force of the nations which have oppressed Judah, but he does not blench before the prospect, but rather insists that the spirit of JEHOVAH is sufficient (unaided by human means) to meet and overcome this force. He, like Isaiah, is the prophet of the Invisible. When the Jews trusted in Pharaoh to save them from Sennacherib, Isaiah warned them that the Egyptians were "men and not God, and their horses flesh, and not *spirit*" (Isa. xxxi. 3). So two centuries later when the Jews hoped that wars and tumults within the empire of Darius would give them the opportunity of establishing their old independence by force of arms, Zechariah urged upon them afresh the older prophet's lesson. His message to the house of David was, "Not by an army, nor by power, but by my *spirit*, saith JEHOVAH-Zebaoth" (iv. 6). The world is governed and events are ordered by an invisible divine Ruler; such is Zechariah's teaching.

Zechariah taught further that the character of JEHOVAH

<sup>1</sup> A. B. Davidson, *Theology of O.T.*, pp. 297—8.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. *Midrash Rabbah*, ch. xii. § 15.

is moral. Among the Gentiles on the contrary some deities were unmoral, in that they did good and evil according to their caprice, and because they demanded from their worshippers simply the performance of religious rites apart from the possession of any moral qualities, while other deities were positively immoral in that they accepted forms of worship which were cruel or licentious. But Zechariah gives teaching wholly different. JEHOVAH is not to be appeased with formal fasts, however severe, since He desires righteous action and merciful conduct (vii. 3—10). JEHOVAH is righteous; He is subject to no caprice. When His own people sin, He punishes them with a punishment corresponding with their grievous fault, even with a captivity of seventy years (i. 12). When their chastisement is accomplished, He receives them again. When the Gentiles add to the prescribed punishment, the Gentiles in turn become guilty (i. 15).

Zechariah's teaching on the FORGIVENESS OF SINS springs directly from his teaching as to the character of JEHOVAH. JEHOVAH will forgive the sin of Judah and restore Judah to His favour on condition of repentance and amendment of life. The teaching of Zechariah is as definite on this point as that of Ps. li. JEHOVAH does not accept sacrifice as a satisfaction for sin. The Prophet describes sacrifice in terms which are startling in the mouth of a Jew. He reminds his hearers that sacrifice had a carnal side; the victim supposed to be given to God was eaten by the worshippers themselves: "When ye eat, and when ye drink, is it not ye that eat, and ye that drink?" (vii. 6). Zechariah is a true prophet in the emphasis which he lays on spiritual religion. He is interested indeed in the rebuilding of the Temple, but chiefly because it is a pledge of JEHOVAH's "return" to His people with mercy and favour (i. 16, 17).

2. ZECHARIAH'S TEACHING AS TO THE FUTURE. It is important to remember that Zechariah is the prophet of Judah's restoration. When the exiles returned from Babylon, what were their prospects—material and spiritual—for the future? The territory of Judah was cut short on every side, Jerusalem was full of ruins and deserted by its

inhabitants, the Temple was a fire-scarred wreck, an empty shell, the fields and vineyards had almost returned to the wild. But as a social and political renewal was needed for Judah, so also a spiritual revival was necessary. The very fact that Haggai and Zechariah were raised up to prophesy is a significant measure of the greatness of their countrymen's need.

In describing Zechariah's predictions as to the future it is necessary to begin with traits which are commonly called "secular." He promises outward prosperity to Jerusalem; the city will be re-built and be inhabited again by thronging crowds dwelling without walls under Divine protection (i. 16; ii. 4). Peace shall be enjoyed, so that the broad streets will be filled with old men leaning on a staff and with children who play (viii. 4, 5). The Temple will be happily completed (iv. 9). The inhabitants may even look forward to the day when they will be ruled in harmony by one who is called "the Shoot" assisted by the priest who stands beside his throne (vi. 12, 13). This last utterance might be interpreted so as to include a promise of deliverance from Persian rule, yet it may on the contrary be no more than an assurance that the land shall continue to prosper under the administration of its native leaders, Zerubbabel and Joshua, unhampered in essentials by the distant suzerain power.

Recent commentators, e.g. Marti, lay much stress on the references to the ruler who bears the title of the "Shoot" or "Sprout" (iii. 8; vi. 12; marg.). They assert that an individual living in Zechariah's own time (i.e. Zerubbabel) is here identified with Messiah. If Marti be right, it follows that the Prophet looked for a Messiah of merely temporary significance, i.e. for a deliverer of the type of the Judges, who preceded the setting up of the Kingdom. But the title "the Shoot" is a title of less import than "Messiah." It contains undoubtedly the promise of the continued vitality of the house of David, and so it is a step halfway to the greater title. But the Prophet himself does not use the title "Messiah" of Zerubbabel, nor does he give a description of the mission of the Shoot which can stand

beside Isa. ix. 1—7 or xi. 1—9. It is in fact a lesser hope which Zechariah here connects with the person of the Jewish governor of Judah.

But for all this the hopes expressed by Zechariah are religious and not worldly: the prophet's sketch of a restored Jerusalem rests on a spiritual basis. Jerusalem is for the future to be defended not by walls but by the presence of JEHOVAH (ii. 5). The Temple is to be built not under the protection of an armed force, but by the unseen help and grace of the spirit of the LORD (iv. 6). Further Jerusalem is to be again the dwelling place of JEHOVAH, Whose power will be so manifested that Gentile nations will seek Him and be joined to Him there (ii. 11, 12; viii. 20—23). The Prophet announces the rise of a "New Jerusalem" as the capital of the Kingdom of God on earth. Zechariah's ideals are both spiritual and catholic; he gives us a foretaste of Christian teaching.

3. GUILT, PUNISHMENT, AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. The pastoral spirit of Zechariah is clearly seen in his teaching regarding guilt and punishment. O.T. history has familiarized our minds with the notion of national guilt and national punishment. JEHOVAH as King has a covenant with Israel as a people; He reaches individuals only indirectly and because they belong to Israel. Such is the general impression left by a study of the historical books of the Old Testament considered by themselves. The sin which led to the Babylonian captivity was national sin, and the punishment was the punishment of a nation.

On the other hand the Captivity itself called out a clear statement of the doctrine of individual guilt and individual punishment. The contemporary prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, both give this teaching, which is summed up in Ezek. xviii. 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The teaching of Zechariah (like that of Ezekiel) is not confined to the subject of national guilt and of national punishment. The prophet of the Restoration speaks of an individual guilt which involves the man's family with him in punishment. The curse will enter the guilty one's house and destroy it completely (ch. v. 4). In such a catastrophe

wife, children, and servants are of course overwhelmed together with the head of the household. His dependents are part of himself and his punishment is not complete unless it takes in these also<sup>1</sup>. But when the guilty is thus punished, the nation (Zechariah teaches) is relieved of guilt: JEHOVAH removes it from Judah as far as the east is from the west. It abides in the land of Shinar, the land of Judah's oppressor (ch. v. 11).

4. ESCHATOLOGY IN ZECH. ix.—xiv. *Messianic Prophecy*. It has been pointed out above (p. xxvii. f.) that Zechariah the prophet gives no clear prediction of the coming of Messiah. The "Shoot" referred to in Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12 represents nothing more than a revival of the depressed house of David; the first stage indeed towards Messianic hope, but not the hope itself. "My servant the Shoot" is a vaguer title than "My servant the Anointed One."

A clearer vision is given through Zechariah the disciple. He expresses the hope for the future in terms which are partly literal and partly typical. He starts from his own present, and looks for the overthrow of those neighbours of Israel (Judah) who have shown themselves her persistent foes. But he strikes a higher note than that of a joyful expectation of their destruction. There is to be a remnant of the Philistines, who will be purified from their pollutions and incorporated into the people of God (ch. ix. 7). Then is to follow the entrance into Zion of her king safely returned from battle and ready to "speak peace unto the nations." The people of Zion will be lifted up and glorified in their city (ix. 9, 16). Next Judah and Joseph, the two tribes and the ten, will be restored together again to their own land. The exiles shall return from Egypt and Assyria, and dwell safely under JEHOVAH'S protection (x. 6, 10, 12).

These promises were made *circ.* 500 B.C. and how far they were realized cannot be known in the silence of history for some 60 or 70 years. It is clear however that when Nehemiah visited Jerusalem in 444 B.C. he found the circumstances of his people far different from these. "The

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the punishment of Achan in Josh. vii. 24, through which the nation was relieved of its guilt.

remnant...there in the province (Judah) are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down and the gates thereof are burned with fire" (Neh. i. 3). No doubt in Zech. ix. as in other prophetic passages JEHOVAH's promises are conditional; they are *offers*, the execution of which depends on the obedient response of those to whom they are made. But these promises, being Divine, do not fail because they are not at once taken up. If they are rejected in one generation, they are offered to a succeeding one.

Moreover the offers are typical and spiritual rather than literal. The king who is brought to Zion as a *prince of peace*, lowly and "saved," matches with no known earthly king of Judah, and certainly not with any Maccabean chief, for no Maccabean was ever "lowly." He is an ideal, a type; and some of his greatest characteristics were realized on earth by Jesus Christ alone. He belongs as much to the New Testament as to the Old; he is a pledge of the continuity of Revelation.

But there are other elements in this picture of the Future beside that which shows the coming of the lowly king. A great act of repentance and return to God is to take place. A fountain for the cleansing away of sin and uncleanness will be opened in Jerusalem. Idolatry and its prophets will be swept away (xii. 10—xiii. 2). After the people have been purified by suffering the covenant between JEHOVAH and His people will be renewed (xiii. 9). These are events of spiritual history, landmarks in the birth of a new Israel. They may be justly compared with the events of the Gospel History; with the Mission of John the Baptist, with the atoning death on the Cross, with the Apostolic break with the retrograde Pharisaic and Sadducean elements in Judaism, with the establishment of the Christian Church on the covenant of the two Sacraments. Zech. ix.—xiv. is in short one of several passages in O.T. in which the teaching of N.T. is in part anticipated.

The conception of the fountain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, i.e. for the high and the low alike among the people of God (Zech. xiii. 1)



deserves careful attention. It is far removed from legal ideas of purification. The work ascribed to the fountain in *v. 1* is ascribed in *v. 2* to JEHOVAH Himself. A real (not a formal) cleansing is meant. In this as in other teachings of this book we find an anticipation of the New Testament. Formal means have no efficacy; JEHOVAH Himself shall purify His people.

Within the terms used above Zech. ix.—xiv. may be said to contain an important element of Messianic Prophecy. But it is right to remember that Prophecy is not the equivalent of Prediction. "Zechariah" does not describe in advance wizard-like the external facts of our Lord's life, but as a Prophet he illuminates the principles which lie behind those great events. History, it has been often said, repeats itself, and some events pictured in Zech. ix.—xiv. are parallel with events of the Gospel History. Such events the Prophet illuminates with a spiritual interpretation which is valid for Christians as it was valid for the Prophet's own generation.

#### § 5. THE PERSIAN EMPIRE IN THE TIME OF HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

	B.C.
Cyrus captures Babylon ... ..	538
Cambyses ... ..	529
Pseudo-Smerdis (Ps.-Bardiya) ...	522
Darius ... ..	521
Xerxes ... ..	485

The story of the Persian empire may be said to begin with the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in 538 (539) B.C. Babylon (*Bab-ilu*, "the Gate of God," in the Assyrio-Babylonian language, *Babel* in Heb.) was the religious capital and also the most imposing city of Western Asia. No city of Persia could be compared with it for importance for a moment. Cyrus by taking Babylon asserted conclusively his claim to the great empire which was possessed by the Assyrians first and afterwards by the Chaldeans<sup>1</sup>. But to

<sup>1</sup> Hence Cyrus is called "king of Babylon" in Ezra v. 13.

the dominions of his predecessors Cyrus added conquests of his own. On the west Lydia, Ionia, Lycia, and Caria, together with all the Greek colonies which they contained, were subdued (Herod. i. 130, 141). To the north-east Cyrus pushed his conquests along the shores of the Caspian and into Central Asia (Bactria), and in war in the region of the Caspian he met his death in 530 or 529 B.C.

Cyrus as a Conqueror stands out as clearly in eastern history as Alexander the Great. His name was a sufficient monument to him. A simple pillar erected in the plain of Murghab (in southern Persia) bears the image of a winged figure and the legend,

I AM CYRUS THE KING THE ACHAEMENIAN.

As a Ruler, on the other hand, the figure of Cyrus is not clearly defined in History, but evidence from two different quarters suggests that he desired to be conciliatory to the different peoples over whom he ruled. The Jewish records state that in his "first" year (i.e. presumably in 538 B.C.) he invited volunteers from all the worshippers of JEHOVAH in his dominions to go up to Jerusalem and there build a House for the God of Israel (Ezra i. 1—3). A Babylonian record shows Cyrus in his relation to the different gods of Babylonia in a similar light. Expressed in the first person it makes Cyrus say that he restored the gods (i.e. the images of the gods) which his predecessor had brought to Babylon, and established them in suitable "habitations" in their own cities<sup>1</sup>. This of course was a politic act.

But it seems that Cyrus, thanks to his wars, had little leisure for seeing that the measures which he approved as a statesman were carried out. He was able to send Sheshbazzar the "prince" (*nāsī*) of Judah to Jerusalem, and to deliver to him Temple vessels of gold and silver (Ezra i. 8), but his permission to rebuild the Temple remained a dead letter during his own reign and that of his son. The purpose of the Jewish builders was frustrated "all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra iv. 5).

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to O.T.*, pp. 382—3.



The reign of Cambyses, the son and immediate successor of Cyrus, was marked by the conquest of Egypt in the year 525 B.C. In his expedition he used great severity towards the conquered, even destroying their temples, but he spared the sanctuary of the Jewish colony at Yeb (Elephantine). On the other hand in passing through Palestine he did not enforce his father's edict for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. Perhaps he was hindered by his absorption in an arduous campaign, or possibly again he had no settled policy himself.

Cambyses is not mentioned in the Old Testament. Other records, Greek (Herodotus and Ctesias) and Persian (the Behistun inscription of Darius), suggest that he was capricious and tyrannical as a ruler. He put his younger brother Smerdis (Bardiya) to death on suspicion, an act which, though executed in secret, had most important results. A certain Magian, whom Darius calls Gaumâta, who resembled Smerdis in appearance, rebelled in the character of Smerdis against Cambyses during his absence in Egypt. Few persons were aware that the younger son of Cyrus was dead, and the false Smerdis, meeting with considerable support, was able to seize the throne (522 B.C.). Cambyses on hearing the news died by misadventure or suicide, and the Magian seemed to be safely established as the ruler of the Persian empire.

He reigned however (according to Ctesias, *apud* Photium, *Bibliotheca*, p. 38, ed. Imm. Bekker) no more than seven months. "The people" (says Darius in the Behistun inscription) "feared him exceedingly, for he slew many who had known the former Smerdis. For this reason did he slay them, *That they may not know that I am not Smerdis, the son of Cyrus*. There was none who dared say aught against Gaumâta the Magian until I came. Then I prayed to Auramazda; Auramazda brought me help. On the tenth day of the month Bâgayâdish I with a few men slew that Gaumâta the Magian, and the chief men who were his followers. At the stronghold called Sikayauvatish in the district named Nisâya in Media I slew him; I dispossessed him of the kingdom."

Here the identity of the Magians needs to be considered. By several Greek and Latin authors they were regarded as a class of soothsayers (cp. Herod. vii. 37: Xerxes asks the Magians the meaning of an eclipse) or even as the priests of the Persian religion (Appuleius, *de magia* 25: *Si Persarum lingua magus est qui nostra sacerdos*). But an earlier passage of Herodotus (i. 101) says expressly that the *Μάγοι* were one of the six "tribes" of the Medes. In other words they were a stratum in the mixed population of Media, and probably a depressed stratum. The victory of Darius over Gaumâta meant that the Persians with the elements of the Median population which were allied to them recovered the hegemony over the rest of the Medes which they had held under Cyrus.

Darius began to reign in 521 B.C., but over an ill-compacted empire. His work for the greater part of his reign was organisation, political and financial. Hence the Persians were wont to contrast Darius as a Huckster (*κἀπηλος*) with Cambyzes the Despot (*δεσπότης*) and Cyrus the Father (Herod. iii. 89). Cyrus and Cambyzes, entangled in wars of conquest, accomplished little towards consolidating the Persian power. In less than twenty years (538—521 B.C.) the new empire had acquired no saving prestige, and Darius who talks about "rebellions," had in fact to reconquer the dominions of Cyrus and Cambyzes for himself.

How this work was accomplished is told by Darius himself. The Behistun inscription mentioned above is written in the old Persian language<sup>1</sup>. It is expressed in the first person. There is no reason to doubt that it was engraved in the lifetime of Darius; it gives unquestionably his version of the events. Historically it is a work of primary importance.

The general course of events is easy to trace, though some doubts remain as to the chronology of the period

<sup>1</sup> With versions in the Babylonian and Susian languages. The inscription first published by Rawlinson has been freshly edited with translations, notes, and illustrations by L. W. King and R. C. Thompson by order of the Trustees of the British Museum, London, 1907.

described. No years are mentioned; the battles are dated only by the month and the day of the month. Still the exact chronology is not of supreme importance, for it may be asserted that all these events occurred during the early years of the reign of Darius, "within the first nine years" (King and Thompson, *Behistun Inscription*, p. xxxviii).

While Darius was in the north making sure of Media two provinces in the south took their fate into their own hands.

"After that I had slain Gaumâta (says Darius) a certain man named Atrina raised a rebellion in Susiana. The people of Susiana went over unto that Atrina; he became king in Susiana. And a certain Babylonian named Nidintu-Bêl lied unto the people saying, *I am Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabonidus*. Then did all the province go over unto that Nidintu-Bêl. He seized on the kingdom of Babylonia."

In fact it soon became clear that Darius was only at the beginning of the task which he had set himself of taking possession of the empire of Cyrus and Cambyses. He had slain a usurper, but he had no conclusive title of his own. It is true that he claimed descent like Cyrus from Teispes (Shishpish in Babylonian, Cishpish in Persian), the son of Achaemenes, and so he declares in the Behistun inscription:

"On that account are we called Achaemenians;...from antiquity hath our race been kings."

But Darius was only one of the clan; he was not the only possible successor of Cambyses, and he was compelled to fight for all that he subsequently held. He was (for the moment) master of Media and of the province of Persia, but he was cut off from the mouths of the Euphrates and the head of the Persian gulf by the temporary success of his two rivals in Babylonia and Susiana. Moreover no ruler could enjoy the full prestige of Master of Western Asia, if Babylon "the lady of kingdoms" (Isa. xlvii. 5) were in the hands of another.

In ruthless energy Darius was no unworthy successor to the Assyrian kings. Against Susiana, the less important province, he despatched an army under one of his

lieutenants, against Babylonia and the army of Nidintu-Bêl he marched in person. Both expeditions were successful. Atrina was brought in fetters to Darius and was slain by him. The conquest of Babylonia was apparently a more serious matter. The passage of the Tigris was disputed by an army aided by ships. When the Persians succeeded in crossing the Tigris Nidintu-Bêl in person met them on the Euphrates, and forced them to fight a second battle. This second battle perhaps decided the fate of Babylon, for Darius without describing further fighting adds:

"By the grace of Auramazda I took Babylon, and captured that Nidintu-Bêl. Then I slew that Nidintu-Bêl in Babylon."

Darius might now reckon himself as the *de facto* successor of Cyrus. The capture of Babylon gave him the prestige which he had hitherto lacked, and probably there was a short interval of peace. Perhaps it is in reference to this period that the prophet's oracle was given, "Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius,...Behold, all the earth sitteth still and is at rest" (Zech. i. 7, 11).

But the period of quiet did not last long. Darius continues his story in the words:

"While I was in Babylon these provinces revolted from me: Persia, Susiana, Media, Assyria, Egypt, Parthia, Margiana, Sattagydia, and Scythia" (in Persian, *Saka*; cp. Herod. vii. 64).

The revolt in Persia and Susiana was evidently put down with ease, but Media offered a more formidable task. A certain Phraortes (*Fravartish* in Persian) rebelled, claiming to belong to the family of Cyaxares, the Median monarch who destroyed Nineveh in 607—6 B.C. Something like a civil war ensued, for the Medes (a mixed people) were divided in allegiance between Darius and Phraortes. "The Persian and Median army which was with me," says Darius, "was small." Not only Media, but Armenia also, its neighbour on the north-west, had to be conquered.

Darius sent an army under a Persian general into Media, and two armies in succession, the first led by an Armenian,

the second by a Persian, into Armenia. Darius claims victory in each case for his army, but in each case he adds that the army waited for him, "until I came into Media."

Darius was no doubt delayed by the necessity of setting in order the affairs of Babylon and other parts of his wide domains. At length however he arrived in Media; Phraortes was defeated and fled into a district called Raga<sup>1</sup>. The unhappy man was captured and brought to Darius.

"I cut off his nose, and his ears, and his tongue, and I put out his eyes, and he was kept in fetters in my court, and all the people beheld him. Then did I crucify him in Ecbatana<sup>2</sup>."

Other revolts were put down with equal energy and vigour, and at the time when the Behistun inscription was engraved Darius could claim the rule of three and twenty provinces.

"[Thus] saith Darius the king: These are the provinces which are subject unto me, and by the grace of Auramazda became I king of them:—Persia, Susiana, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, the islands of the sea, Sparda, Ionia, Media, Armenia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria, Chorasmia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Scythia, Sattagydia, Arachosia, and Maka; twenty-three lands in all<sup>3</sup>."

With this may be compared the two statements of Herodotus; *first*, that all that were in Asia (except the Arabians) obeyed Darius, *secondly*, that Darius established *twenty* governments, which they (the Persians) call satrapies (Herod. iii. 89, 91).

The Behistun inscription records the victory of Darius over nine rival kings, eight of whom are portrayed standing before the victor, while the ninth (Pseudo-Smerdis the Magian) lies on the ground under the foot of the conqueror. But it is clear that Darius added a supplement at a later time to his original inscription. Part of the writing has

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the district of which Rages (Tobit i. 14) was the capital.

<sup>2</sup> This is the form of the name in Aeschylus, *Persae*, 14; in Ezra vi. 2 it is "Achmetha"; in the Behistun inscription, "Hagmatâna."

<sup>3</sup> This empire thus extended from Egypt in the west to Balkh and the River Indus in the east.

been removed, and a tenth figure, that of Skunkha the Scythian, has been added. A postscript, written in old Persian only, records that Darius in person marched against Scythia (*abiy Sakâm*), crossed the *Tigris*...unto the sea, slew and captured many Scythians. "Then the province became mine<sup>1</sup>."

This expedition against Asiatic Scythians, no doubt, is to be distinguished from the expedition of Darius against the (European) "Scythians" recorded in Herod. iv.<sup>2</sup> The Greek historian describes a march of the Persian king into regions west of the Black Sea, in the course of which the crossing and the recrossing of the *Ister* (Danube) formed the most striking incidents.

The Behistun inscription stops short of the full tale of the wars of Darius. In 499 B.C. came the great revolt of the Ionians of Asia Minor and the islands against the Persians, which was not put down till 493 B.C. In 490 the Persians landed in Attica, but were defeated at Marathon. In 485 (486) Darius died and was succeeded by Xerxes.

This record of War and Conquest does not exhaust the acts of Darius. His reputation among the Persians was rather that of a financier (*κίππηλος*, Herod. iii. 89). He struck coins of the purest gold (Herod. iv. 166), and made a survey of his dominions in order to fix the amount of tribute which each province was to pay (Herod. iii. 89). He was the reorganiser of the Persian empire. In the Behistun inscription he claims to be a restorer of the good customs of the Past: "The temples which Gaumâta the Magian had destroyed I restored for the people....I settled the people in their place, the people of Persia and Media and the other provinces." In the same spirit he despatched a native Egyptian official into Egypt "in order to re-establish the school of sacred scribes after its ruin." This official reports, "I gave them all their revenues, all their needs according to the word, as had been done for them before. His Majesty (Darius) did this because he knew the virtue of

<sup>1</sup> The passage is seriously mutilated; I follow the reading of King and Thompson.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Herod. vii. 64.



this work of restoring all that he found wrecked, and to restore the names of all the gods, their temples, their endowments, and the management of their feasts for ever<sup>1</sup>."

The policy which Darius pursued in Persia, Media, and Egypt, he pursued in Judah also. In the second year of his reign Haggai and Zechariah the prophets stirred up Zerubbabel the governor of Judah and Jeshua the priest to resume the interrupted work of rebuilding "the house of God which is at Jerusalem" (Ezra iv. 24; v. 1, 2). But as yet they could not claim the King's licence, and they were challenged at once by Tattenai, governor of Syria. Appeal was made to Darius. The Jews pleaded the warrant of the decree of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1 ff.), but this decree could not be found in Babylon. Subsequently the missing document was found at Achmetha (Ecbatana) in Media (Ezra v. 17; vi. 1 ff.).

The discovery brought Darius to decide whole-heartedly for the Jews. They were seeking to restore a temple, and they appealed to a decree issued by one of his predecessors. His answer was altogether favourable:

"Let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews build this house of God *in its place*. Moreover I make a decree...that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the River, expenses be given with all diligence unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of...let it be given them day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savour unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons....I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with all diligence." (Ezra vi. 7 ff.)

In all this we hear the echo of the passage quoted above from the Behistun inscription and of the report of the Egyptian official. When we place our authorities side by side we gain a consistent portrait of Darius as a restorer of old paths in religion. It was indeed almost inevitable that he should favour the re-building of the Temple at Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, iii. 362.

## § 6. THE WORK OF HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

*Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of JEHOVAH by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, JEHOVAH stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath JEHOVAH, the God of heaven, given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of JEHOVAH, the God of Israel (he is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever is left, in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.* Ezra i. 1—4

The one great public event in which Haggai and Zechariah took a leading part was the rebuilding of the Temple. For the history of this event our authorities are Ezra i.—iv. 5; iv. 24—vi. 15 together with the books of the two prophets themselves. Unfortunately historical critics find it difficult to reconcile the statements of Ezra with the inferences to be drawn from the language of Haggai and Zechariah, and (moreover) they feel doubts about the genuineness of the proclamation ascribed to Cyrus. So they still inquire, How did the rebuilding of the Temple come about? and, To whom was the inception of the work due?

The narrative of the book of Ezra is at least quite clear in its general statements. The first impulse was due to a proclamation issued by Cyrus in 538 B.C. inviting the Jews who were scattered throughout his dominions to go up to Jerusalem and build, and permitting their neighbours to help them with means for their journey. The moderation of this proclamation should save it from the suspicion of



having been invented by the Jews. Yet such a suspicion has been expressed or insinuated<sup>1</sup>.

In the first place the proclamation was permissive only; if the Temple was built, the Persian king would no doubt take credit for a religious act, but he laid no command on any one to see that the work was carried out. In the second place the proclamation was thoroughly in accordance with the policy of the early Persian kings, who protected and befriended the worship of the subject peoples.

Cyrus, so it is said on his Clay Cylinder, restored the "gods" to their own cities, whom his predecessor Nabu-naid had removed. Cambyses, son of Cyrus, according to the story told on the statue of an Egyptian official, showed great favour to an Egyptian goddess. At this official's suggestion he gave orders that the desecrated temple of Neit "the divine mother" at Sais should be purified and that its revenues should be restored. More than this the Persian king came himself to the sanctuary, "worshipped with much devotion...and made great offering of all good things to Neit<sup>2</sup>." A Persian conqueror, anxious to conciliate the conquered peoples and perhaps superstitiously afraid of the "God of the land" (cp. 2 Kings xvii. 26 f.), would naturally issue such a proclamation as that attributed to Cyrus in Ezra i. 1.

If the substance of the proclamation be free from historic doubt, the language of it does not expose it to serious suspicion. It may be conceded readily that Cyrus is not quoted according to the *ipsissima verba* of his pronouncement. There are in fact three points which have attracted discussion:

(1) The title "king of Persia" attached to the name of Cyrus (v. 2).

(2) The use of the name JEHOVAH coupled with the identification of JEHOVAH with "the God of heaven" (v. 2).

(3) The parenthetical confession, "He is the God," made in reference to JEHOVAH (v. 3).

<sup>1</sup> Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life*, page 5.

<sup>2</sup> Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, iii. 361.

(1) The title "king of Persia" (*v.* 2) is probably due to the editor (of Ezra) who has already used it in *v.* 1. This editor probably lived *circ.* 300 B.C. after the fall of the Persian empire, when it became necessary to give a fuller title than "the King" to distinguish the Persian king from the successors of Alexander the Great who divided his empire, and "did all put diadems upon themselves" (1 Macc. i. 9). In any case the question is one of detail only.

(2) The introduction of the name יהוה into the proclamation may be due either to the editor of the book, if the text be sound, or possibly to a later scribe. The LXX give no equivalent for יהוה either in *v.* 2 or in *v.* 3, and it is possible that the name was absent from the Hebrew text which lay before them.

(3) The confession, "He is the God" ("He is God," R.V. text), appended to the name יהוה, is again due probably to the editor of the book of Ezra, provided that the rendering of R.V. text be right. But on the contrary it is likely that the rendering of R.V. margin, "He is the God which is in Jerusalem," is correct.

The general conclusion must be that the language here attributed to Cyrus is *not* unnatural in the proclamation of a Persian king which has passed through Jewish hands. The "editing" at the most has had only slight influence on the main purport of the proclamation.

In the absence of stronger arguments than these against the accuracy of Ezra i. ff. we may conclude that Cyrus did issue a permissive proclamation for the rebuilding of the Temple in 538 B.C., and that an important body of Jews returned to Judah, prepared apparently to respond to the King's invitation. According to Ezra iv. 1—5 these began to build the Temple, while Cyrus still reigned (538—529 B.C.); according to Ezra iii. 8 the foundation was laid in the second year of their return to Jerusalem. But the work was stopped, when it was barely begun, and the Temple lay waste until the second year of Darius. Doubts have been urged against this account, but there is nothing really improbable in it. The Jews showed an exclusive temper; their neighbours resented it, and succeeded in thwarting their

cherished plan. Could it have happened otherwise? Would the Persian conqueror turn from his wars to see that his *permissive* proclamation was proving effective in remote Judaea? The Jews must see to it themselves!

But in the second year of Darius the Jews were suffering from drought, possibly from a drought prolonged over some years. A sense of failure lay upon the people (Hag. i. 9, 10; ii. 16, 17). The sixth month had come, and in one month more all harvest effort would be over. In a prosperous season a prophet might have spoken in vain, but now that the people were softened by adversity they were disposed to listen.

The time had come and the man. This was Haggai, a prophet of whose antecedents nothing is known. He is introduced both in his own book and in Ezra v. 1 simply as "Haggai the prophet." No genealogy is attached to his name. It is possible either that he was of uncertain descent or that he was a proselyte<sup>1</sup>. But in any case he was sure of his message. He declared that the scarcity from which the Jews were suffering was a reminder from JEHOVAH to stir them up to consider their ways. Hitherto they had taken too much thought for their own comfort, and had built paneled houses for themselves, while they were content to leave the house of JEHOVAH lying waste (Hag. i. 9). Let them now repair their fault, and JEHOVAH would bless them once more in their corn and wine and oil.

This appeal of Haggai did not pass unheeded, but it was re-inforced before it was obeyed. The fact of the response is stated (out of the order of events) in Hag. i. 12—14. It is possible even that v. 15 ("in the four and twentieth day of the month, in the sixth month") is intended to assign a date to it. But the true date of the act of obedience there described is given in Hag. ii. 10—19 unmistakably as "the four and twentieth day of the *ninth* month." But ere this a second voice had spoken in support of Haggai, for according to Zech. i. 1, Zechariah the son of Iddo had begun to prophesy in the eighth month. Thus we see that the renewal of work

<sup>1</sup> A similar case is that of Amos; see Amos i. 1.

on the Temple was due, as is stated in Ezra v. 1, to the combined activity of the two prophets.

They are always mentioned in this order—Haggai and Zechariah. Both indeed began to prophesy in the same year, the second year of Darius, but Haggai spoke first, and it may be that his boldness gave courage to Zechariah to deliver his message in turn. It was in any case Haggai who was great enough to break the silence, and his name is rightly placed before that of his contemporary.

What was the nature of the work which was begun with the encouragement of the two prophets? Without doubt it was a rebuilding and not the erection of a wholly new structure. The statement of Hag. ii. 18, "the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid," must not be understood in its literal sense. Almost the same phrase is used in Ezra iii. 11 in reference to an earlier occasion. In both passages the phrase is to be understood figuratively of the commencement of work on the Temple. A better translation would be, "The LORD's temple was founded" (or "begun"). But the work did not need to begin with the foundations; the massive stones laid by Solomon (1 Kings v. 17; see note in *Camb. Bible*) probably suffered little through the burning of the House by the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxv. 9). Even the walls, built as they were of huge stones, must have remained standing. The Temple was disfigured by fire and ruinous, but it could still be used for worship. The worshippers did not enter "the House," but stood without in the Temple courts, and as long as there was an altar in front of the House sacrifices could be offered and prayer could be made, though the House itself was a ruin (Ezra iii. 3—10). According to this passage the altar of burnt offering was actually set up when the returning exiles first reached Jerusalem in response to the edict of Cyrus.

The fault for which Haggai blamed his countrymen was that they were content that the Temple should remain a ruin while their own houses were finished with timber. His cry is for *wood*—to line the walls of the House and probably also to roof it. The House itself was standing;

the Prophet points to it (Hag. i. 4), but it was unfit for "habitation." Solomon's temple had been a house of cedar (1 Kings vi. 18), and Haggai appeals to his countrymen to make a paneled dwelling for their LORD (Hag. i. 8). The continued desolation of the House was a sign of the Jews' unbelief. As soon as they accepted the assurances of Haggai and Zechariah that JEHOVAH would fill the House with glory (Hag. ii. 7; cp. Zech. ii. 5), they felt compelled to do honour to the Temple. Some work would need to be done with stone on the outer walls, but the main task would be to "ciel" the House with panels of wood.

From Ezra iv. 24 we learn that the work was begun in the second year of Darius and from Ezra vi. 15 that it was finished in his sixth year on the third day of Adar (the twelfth month). But we further learn that Tattenai governor of Syria ("governor beyond the River") challenged the right of the Jews to build, and that an appeal was made to Darius to decide the question. Inquiry was made and a record of the decree of Cyrus was found at Achmetha (Ecbatana), and so the work was brought to a successful issue under the authority of a rescript of Darius.

To this last act of opposition we find no clear reference in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, nor was it perhaps of sufficient abiding importance to need their notice. The whole work was at length accomplished within four years, a short period compared with the seventeen or eighteen years of inaction which had preceded. The outstanding feature was not the short-lived opposition of Tattenai, but the prevailing Divine help given by means of the two prophets.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Haggai's work (as we know it from his book) was done, when the work on the Temple was revived. It is otherwise with Zechariah. His prophecies take a wider range. With him the rebuilding of the Temple is significant chiefly as a sign of the restoration of the people of God dwelling in Judah and Jerusalem. He devoted himself to the spiritual edification of the community. Like the older prophets he urged his people to show mercy and to do justice, and like the greatest

of them he proclaimed that fasting and religious ordinances could not take the place of righteousness. Haggai's ministry was for a year of stress, Zechariah's for all times at which the claims of the moral law are neglected. See above, § 4, THE TEACHING OF ZECHARIAH.

§ 7. FORMS OF PROSODY IN THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH.  
ALLEGED METRICAL PASSAGES.

The Authorized Version of the Old Testament issued in 1611 gives no hint to its readers that important parts of the original even outside the Psalter are poetical not only in thought but to a certain degree in form. But towards the end of the eighteenth century Robert Lowth (afterwards Bishop of London) published the results of his investigations into Poetic Parallelism (*Parallelismus Membrorum*). He showed that the most constant and conspicuous feature of Hebrew prosody is a certain grouping of short lines into couplets (or triplets). The lines which make up these couplets are "parallel" to one another in sense. This parallelism is of different kinds. Sometimes the second line partly repeats the first, only carrying on the thought a little further, as in Psalm xxxvii. 29:

The righteous shall inherit the land,  
And dwell therein for ever.

Sometimes again the two lines express a comparison:

The hills stand about Jerusalem,  
JEHOVAH standeth about his people—.

A *third* line may be used (as in this instance) to complete the sense,

From this time forth and for evermore.  
(Psalm cxxv. 2.)

A second feature of Hebrew prosody is found in the grouping together of couplets or triplets or both intermixed in stanzas or strophes. Thus the Second Psalm, as printed in R.V., is seen to consist of four well marked strophes. The Third Chapter of Lamentations has twenty-two stanzas,



each beginning in each of its three verses with its own letter of the Hebrew alphabet. These stanzas also are shown in R.V.

A third feature of Hebrew prosody, according to perhaps an increasing number of O.T. scholars, is metre. Of this more is said below.

The first two features of Hebrew prosody (parallelism and strophic arrangement) are found not only in the acknowledged poetical books but also in many prophetic passages. Thus the First Chapter of Isaiah shows clear parallelism in almost every verse, and it is easy to divide it into fairly obvious strophes. So again the book of Jeremiah contains many passages marked by the continuous use of parallelism, some very striking, e.g. in ch. iv.

Probably the most reasonable account to be given of the matter is that the prophets in the exaltation arising from the delivery of their message fell necessarily and unconsciously into the use of poetic forms, or at least into the use of parallelism. The parallel clauses often enabled them to emphasize without monotony the teaching they desired to give, and frequently the figurative language of poetry proved the best medium for the communication of the sublime truths which had been revealed to them.

Thus the prophecies, as belonging to the highest kind of oratory, tend to adopt the form of poetry. But any more definite statement than this is hazardous. Yet many scholars filled with a passion for systematizing and for definition do go further. They claim to discover parallelism, strophic structure, and even metre in many passages of the Prophets.

This is the case with Zech. ix.—xiii. It is true that scholars do not agree among themselves in detail, but if we add their different statements together we find that a sum amounting to the greater part of this section of the book has been declared to be poetical in form. In illustration of this statement it is sufficient to append in a tabular form the views of Marti and Duhm<sup>1</sup> on this section.

<sup>1</sup> In *Z.A.T.W.* for 1911; see § 8 for references.

## METRICAL PASSAGES IN ZECH. ix.—xiii.

	MARTI.	DUHM.
ix. 1—7.	Four double stanzas Six lines each.	Eight single stanzas Three lines each.
ix. 11.	New stanzas begin Four lines each.	Old stanzas continue Three lines each.
xi. 4—16.	Prose.	xi. 4—14. Stanzas Three lines each.
xii. 1—xiii. 2.	Stanzas (irregular) Three lines each.	Prose.
xiii. 7.	One stanza Six lines.	Two stanzas Three lines each.
xiii. 8, 9.	Stanzas Six lines each.	Prose.

The results tabulated are not quite so discordant as they appear at first. We may accept them so far as to acknowledge that traces of poetical form are to be found in fact in the second half of Zechariah. The presence of parallelism must be acknowledged, and though the outline of some of the proposed strophes is shadowy, we may safely acknowledge that several instances of strophic arrangement are well established. But grave doubt arises when Marti and Duhm proceed to discover metre in Zech. ix.—xiii. It is true that they seem to have behind them the consent of the majority of German O.T. scholars, but on the other hand it must be said that their schemes of "metre" involve too many arbitrary alterations of the text. Too often they have to make their metre by emending the text, because they cannot find it in the text as it stands.

The metre which modern scholars claim for Hebrew poetry goes not by long and short syllables as in Greek and Latin, but by accented syllables as in English. A favourite metre to find is one with three accented syllables in each line ("trimeters") as in Byron's poem:

A kîng was ón his thróne  
And sátraps thrónged the háll  
A thóusand bríght lamps shóne  
On thát high féstíval.



But it is to be noted that the music of these lines depends on the regularity with which unaccented syllables (as well as accented syllables) occur. Each line contains three on which the accent does *not* fall. But this regular number of unaccented syllables is not claimed for Hebrew measures. The majority of German metricists say, that if the number of *accented* syllables be regularly kept in the successive lines of a poem, a few more or a few less unaccented syllables make no difference to the metre. But this (be it noted) makes a somewhat irregular measure. One line may have a total of *six* syllables and the next (though in the same metre) *eight*.

A favourable specimen of the attempt to discover metre is supplied by Zech. ix. 3, 4. Marti (see above) describes the passage as a double stanza of six lines, Duhm as two single stanzas of three lines each. (This difference is of small moment.) Both would scan the lines as "trimeters." The following is a translation into English according to the "metre":

And Týrus buílt her fórtress,  
And heápt up sílver as the dúst  
And góld as míre of stréets.

Behóld, the LÓRD will expél her,  
And smíte her pówer by séa,  
And shé with fire shall be búrnt.

This "metre," it will be observed, can hardly be called strict, especially if the whole passage (*vv.* 1—7) which is asserted to be in the same metre be taken into consideration. In that case we are forcibly reminded of St Jerome's description of the "hexameters" of the book of Job given in the first of his two prefaces to the book. "The verses are hexameters," he writes, "flowing on with dactyl and spondee, and (on account of the genius of the Hebrew language) admitting other feet also, not equivalent in syllables but in quantity. At times moreover the rhythm is borne onward of its own motion free from bondage to number of feet." In other words Hebrew metre is singularly irregular, and sometimes it fails altogether.

If we venture to assert any use of metre in Zech. ix.—

xiii., we can only do it safely under the conditions suggested by the language of St Jerome. Indications are few in number and not constant in occurrence. It looks as though, granted that there are metrical verses to be found, these are embedded in prose passages. There does indeed appear to be a carelessly measured measure in ix. 3, 4, and in addition a grouping of six lines into two stanzas. But (as the language of St Jerome leads us to expect) we do not find that the use of these prosodial forms is well sustained. There are signs, but less distinct signs, of metre in the later verses of the same chapter, and indications, but somewhat blurred, of a grouping of lines into stanzas. Faced by facts which bend only here and there to prosodial forms, Marti and Duhm betray the weakness of their case by resorting to several serious "emendations" of the Hebrew (Masoretic) text. The extent of these and the divergences between the proposals (prosodial and textual) of Marti and Duhm may be illustrated from their treatment of Zech. ix. 11—14.

The divergences of these two scholars are sufficient of themselves to discredit the attempt to find strict prosodial forms here. Both schemes involve arbitrary emendations of the text and even with the help of these neither scheme can show a satisfactory grouping of lines into stanzas. Even if we take into consideration the two more plausible stanzas quoted in an earlier place (ch. ix. 3, 4), the main result is not affected. This is that there existed no metrical law (whether of three or of any other number of accented syllables) which bound the Hebrew singers strictly, as the Greek and Latin poets were bound. Hebrew poetry was subject only to a living sense of rhythm in the poet's heart.

Hebrew poetry is in short so little subject to rules of prosody that even in an acknowledged poetical book, that of Job, the form which Jerome describes as metrical is allowed (he tells us) to pass into the form of mere prose. With this warning before us it is not wise to attempt to fix a metrical form upon Zech. ix.—xiii., and certainly not by the free use of emendation of the text.

*According to K. Marii.*

(Stanzas of four lines each—trimeters.)

FIRST STANZA (of a new poem).

11. For thy covenant-blood I release  
Thy prisoners also from the pit;  
(*Omit*, Wherein no water is found.)
12. And the prisoners of hope  
Shall return to thee, O Zion<sup>1</sup>.  
(*Omit*, Even to-day do I declare, "I give thee  
compensation double.")

SECOND STANZA.

13. When I bend Judah for me  
As a bow which I fill with Ephraim,  
And summon thy sons<sup>2</sup> against<sup>3</sup> Yavan,  
And make thee as a hero's sword;

THIRD STANZA.

14. Then JEHOVAH shall be seen over them,  
And his arrow shall go forth as the lightning;  
And<sup>4</sup> JEHOVAH shall blow the trumpet,  
And he shall march with the storms of the south.

<sup>1</sup> The whole line emended, without support from the LXX.  
<sup>2</sup> O Zion *omitted without support from the LXX.*  
<sup>3</sup> Thy sons *omitted*; LXX *omits* thy only.  
<sup>4</sup> Adonai (a Divine title) *omitted without support from the LXX.*

*According to B. Duhm.*

(Stanzas of three lines each—trimeters.)

FIFTH AND SIXTH STANZAS (of a poem beginning v. 9).

11. For thy covenant-blood I release  
Thy prisoners also from the pit,  
Wherein no water is found.
12. Return, ye prisoners of hope<sup>1</sup>,  
For messengers<sup>2</sup> tell you to-day,  
"I give you<sup>3</sup> compensation double,"

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH STANZAS.

13. When I bend Judah for me  
As a bow which I fill with Ephraim,  
And arouse thy sons, O Zion,  
(*Omit*, against thy sons, O Yavan,)  
And make thee as a hero's sword;
14. Then JEHOVAH shall be seen over them,  
And his arrow shall go forth as the lightning.

NINTH STANZA.

- And<sup>4</sup> JEHOVAH shall blow the trumpet,  
And he shall march with the storms of the south;
15. JEHOVAH<sup>5</sup> shall defend them.

<sup>1</sup> To the stronghold *omitted contrary to the LXX.*  
<sup>2</sup> An emendation (singular to plural).  
<sup>3</sup> Thee *emended* to you, *contrary to the LXX.*  
<sup>4</sup> Adonai *omitted without support from the LXX.*  
<sup>5</sup> Zebaoth *omitted contrary to the LXX.*

## § 8. TEXT, VERSIONS, AND COMMENTARIES.

(a) *Hebrew text.*

The original text of these prophets has suffered through transcription, and in some few places it appears to the Hebrew student that the original reading has been lost, though this loss is not clearly to be seen in the English Version. Thus Hag. i. 15 (Heb. text) is connected by the punctuation neither with the preceding nor with the following words, and there is no indication to show to what event the date given is meant to refer. The text cannot be correct. Again the second sentence included in Zech. vi. 15 (Heb. text) is a fragment, and the word *this* supplied in the E.V. is due to a mere conjecture; the sentence in fact is incomplete. In Zech. xii. 10 the words, *They shall look unto me whom they pierced*, certainly contain some textual error; cp. John xix. 37. Again many scholars suspect that the text of Zech. ix. 13, "thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan (Yavan)" is redundant. In this last instance the uncertainty of the text if it be a fact is of great importance, for if the word *Yavan* be not genuine, the argument for dating the passage within the Grecian period is deprived of support, which has been regarded as decisive by Nowack and others. A few other instances of doubtful readings of the Masoretic text might be given, and it is clear that a few "primitive errors" are to be acknowledged, which can only be conjecturally corrected. On the other hand the lengthy list given in the International Critical Commentary, if subjected to careful revision, would doubtless be considerably reduced.

The best edition of the Masoretic text of the Minor Prophets is that issued in a separate form by the late Dr C. D. Ginsburg for the B.F. Bible Society (MCMX).

(b) *The LXX.*

The Greek version (LXX) of these three Minor Prophets is our earliest help for the interpretation of the text. In character it varies somewhat. Usually it gives an exceedingly literal rendering, which sometimes verges on obscurity.

Occasionally again it has striking divergencies from the Masoretic text, which may be due to the use of a Hebrew text varying considerably from the Masoretic. A list of some of the more interesting instances is appended.

Hag. i. 8, M.T., "and bring wood."

LXX, καὶ κόψατε ξύλα, "and *cut* wood" (possibly from a different Heb. reading).

ii. 9.

LXX adds at the end of the verse, καὶ εἰρήνην ψυχῆς εἰς περιποίησιν παντὶ τῷ κτίζοντι τοῦ ἀναστῆσαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, "and peace of soul for a possession to every one who founds and raises up this temple anew." (The awkward Greek phrase κτίζειν τοῦ ἀναστῆσαι follows a Heb. construction found in Gen. ii. 3. Probably therefore the addition had a Hebrew original, and it may be a true reading preserved in LXX.)

ii. 14, end.

LXX adds, "Ye hated them that reprove in the gate" (καὶ ἐμισείτε ἐν πύλαις ἐλέγχοντας); cp. Amos v. 10.

Zech. i. 8, M.T., "he was standing *among the myrtles* which were in the *glen*."

LXX, οὗτος ἰσθῆκει ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ὀρέων τῶν κατασκίων, "This one was standing among the *overshadowing mountains*."

(The rare Heb. word *hădassîm* "myrtles" is confused in LXX with the common word *hārîm*, "mountains"; cp. Zech. vi. 1.)

ii. 4, M.T., "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as *villages without walls*" (Heb. *pěrvāzōth*).

LXX, κατακάρπως κατοικηθήσεται Ἱερουσαλήμ, "Jerusalem shall be inhabited *abundantly*."

(A loose paraphrase, possibly a guess of LXX. They may have thought of the Heb. *parah*, "be fruitful.")

ii. 13, M.T., "he is waked up out of his holy *habitation*" (cp. Ps. lxxviii. 5).

LXX, ἐξεγέργεται ἐκ νεφελῶν ἀγίων αὐτοῦ, "he is waked up out of the *clouds* of his holy ones."

(A confusion between two Heb. words which are somewhat alike.)

iv. 10, M.T., "Who hath despised the day of small things?"

LXX (hardly intelligible), *τίς ἐξουδένωσε εἰς ἡμέρας μικράς* ;  
 "Who hath despised at small days?"

(Here *εἰς* is a literal rendering of a Hebrew preposition.)

vi. 10, 14. (In both these verses proper names are translated as though they were common nouns.)

Mal. iii. 6. This verse of the M.T. is divided in the LXX between two paragraphs, one ending with the words *διότι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν καὶ οὐκ ἠλλοίωμαι*, "Because I am the Lord your God and I am not changed," while the second paragraph begins, *καὶ ὑμεῖς, υἱοὶ Ἰακώβ, οὐκ ἀπέχεσθε* (*ἀπὸ τῶν ἀδικιῶν*), "and ye, sons of Jacob, abstain not" (from the iniquities, etc.).

Here perhaps the LXX is nearer than M.T. to the original text.

iv. 4—6, M.T.=E.V. Here LXX has a different arrangement of the text, the verses being in the order 5, 6, 4. See introductory note to Mal. iv. 4—6.

The foregoing list shows pretty clearly that the Greek version contains much that is interesting along with some bad mistakes and inferior readings. Great caution is needed in using the LXX for the correction of faults in the M.T.

The best and most convenient edition of the Greek Minor Prophets is that found in vol. III. of the Old Testament in Greek edited by Dr Swete. It gives the text of the codex Vaticanus with a selection of various readings from the Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS. Some renderings from the other Greek translators, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, are quoted from the codex Marchalianus (Q).

### (c) *The Revised Version.*

The Revised Version of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi is a disappointing work, and inferior as a whole to the American Standard Version. (See next section.) Some obscurities of the A.V. are retained, and the translation of 1611 is left uncorrected in several important places. The work of the Revisers may be studied in the following

passages: Hag. i. 2; ii. 5; [7, not an improvement]; 9; 16; Zech. ii. 11; iii. 1; 7; iv. 14; v. 3; vii. 2; ix. 1, 2; x. 1; 4; xi. 7; 16; xiii. 5; xiv. 1; 5 (marg.); 6 (also marg.); Mal. i. 5; 10; 11; ii. 3; 12; 15 f.; iii. 17; iv. 2.

(d) *The American Standard Version.*

The English Revised Version is not the only revision of the Authorized Version which is worthy of attention. Revision Companies were formed in America, which worked with the British Companies during the period 1871—1885. At first the only edition issued was the well-known work issued by the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, in which the preferences of the American Companies were shown in an Appendix to the Old Testament and in an Appendix to the New. Later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, an English Bible was published described on the title page as “Newly edited by the American Revision Committee | A.D. 1901 | Standard Edition.” In this work most, but by no means all, of the American preferences were taken into the text, and the labour of revision was further extended. In some cases the wording of the A.V. was restored, in others quite new renderings were introduced. An attempt was made to attain greater uniformity of rendering in the Old Testament, for the Revisers of 1885 had shown not a little timidity in seeking for consistency. The name “Jehovah” (not in capitals) was used in the English wherever it occurs in the Hebrew. Finally some archaisms were removed which had been left in 1881 and 1885.

The version of the three Minor Prophets thus revised contains some good renderings, some perhaps superior in character to those of the R.V. of 1885. A few instances are given here.

Hag. ii. 7. R.V., “The *desirable* things of all nations shall come”;

Amer., “the *precious* things.”



- Zech. ii. 8. R.V., "which *spoiled* you";  
 Amer., "which *plundered* you."
- iii. 5. R.V., "And *I* said" (marg., "*he* said");  
 Amer. (no marg.).
- ibid.* R.V., "a *fair* mitre";  
 Amer., "a *clean* mitre."
- iii. 10. R.V., "the LORD of hosts";  
 Amer., "Jehovah of hosts."
- iv. 7. R.V., "the *head* stone";  
 Amer., "the *top* stone."
- iv. 14. R.V., "the two *sons of oil*";  
 Amer., "the two *anointed ones*" (so A.V.).
- v. 3. R.V., "shall be *purged out*" (*bis*);  
 Amer., "shall be *cut off* (*bis*)."
- vi. 7. R.V., "*the bay* went forth" (marg. "*the strong*");  
 Amer., "*the strong* went forth" (marg. "Syriac and Aquila, *red*").
- ix. 2. R.V., "because *she* is very wise";  
 Amer., "because *they are* very wise."
- ix. 11. R.V., "I have *sent forth* thy prisoners out of the pit";  
 Amer., "I have *set free* thy prisoners *from* the pit."
- x. 4. R.V., "from him every *exactor*" (marg. "*ruler*");  
 Amer., "from him every *ruler*."
- xi. 2. R.V., "*Howl*, O fir tree";  
 Amer., "*Wail*, O fir tree."
- xi. 13. R.V., "unto the potter, in the house of the LORD"  
 (marg. "The Syriac reads, *into the treasury*");  
 Amer. (no marg.).
- xii. 4. R.V., "every horse with *astonishment*";  
 Amer., "every horse with *terror*."
- xiv. 6. R.V., "that the light shall not be *with brightness*  
 and *with gloom*";  
 Amer., "that there shall not be light; the *bright ones*  
 shall *withdraw themselves*."
- xiv. 10. R.V., "All the land shall be *turned as* the Arabah";  
 Amer., "shall be *made like* the Arabah."
- xiv. 14. R.V., "shall fight *against* Jerusalem";  
 Amer., "*at* Jerusalem."

Mal. i. 11. R.V., "In every place incense is offered unto my name, and a pure offering";

Amer., "In every place incense *shall be offered* unto my name, and a pure offering."

iii. 17. R.V., "They shall be mine,...even a *peculiar treasure*."

Amer., "They shall be mine, even *mine own possession*."

Of Commentaries and helps to the study of the Minor Prophets the following may be mentioned:

(1) IN ENGLISH. George Adam Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* ("Expositor's Bible"), London, 1898. A stimulating book written in full sympathy with modern criticism, but independent in view. The treatment of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi is to be found in vol. II.

S. R. Driver, *The Minor Prophets* ("Century Bible"), Edinburgh [Preface dated 1906]. A useful book, but perhaps too small to represent fairly Dr Driver's powers. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are treated in vol. II.

C. H. H. Wright, *Zechariah and his prophecies* ("Bampton Lectures"), London, 1879. Dr Wright, without giving a definite decision, is generally in favour of the "integrity" of the book. He argues strongly against the view that Zech. ix., x. is a pre-exilic passage. His work is learned and still of value.

A. F. Kirkpatrick [now Dean of Ely], *The Doctrine of the Prophets* ("Warburtonian Lectures"), London (First edition, 1892; Third, 1901). Three lectures are given to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (pp. 413—478 and 494—513). Beside an account of the teaching contained in these three books there is a critical discussion of the date of Zech. ix.—xi. and of Zech. xii.—xiv. The meaning of several difficult passages is discussed as occasion arises.

*International Critical Commentary*: Haggai and Zechariah by H. G. Mitchell, D.D.; Malachi by I. M. Powis Smith, Ph.D.: Edinburgh, 1912. A full record of the opinions of scholars and commentators on the three Prophets.

(2) IN FRENCH. A. van Hoonacker, Professor at Louvain, *Les douze petits Prophètes*, Paris, 1908. Full and

careful, and perhaps at its best in the commentary on Haggai and Zechariah. Other important works by the same author are *Zorobabel et le second temple* (1892) and *Nouvelles études sur la Restauration juive après l'exil de Babylone* (1895).

Tony André, Privat-docent at Geneva, *Le prophète Aggée*, Paris, 1895. An elaborate work containing full and clear discussions of all problems connected with the Prophet. The author holds that Hag. ii. 10—19 is somewhat earlier than the rest of the book, and that it does not come from the hand of Haggai.

(3) IN GERMAN. Heinrich Ewald, *Die Propheten des alten Bundes* (2<sup>te</sup> Ausg.), Göttingen, 1867. In three volumes. Zech. ix.—xi.; xiii. 7—9 is included in vol. I as the work of an unknown prophet contemporary with Isaiah the son of Amoz; pp. 248—271 (*E.T.* i. 305—333). Zech. xii. 1—xiii. 6 with ch. xiv. is to be found in vol. II as the work of an unknown pre-exilic prophet between Habakkuk and Jeremiah; pp. 52—63 (*E.T.* iii. 49—59). Finally Haggai, Zechariah i.—viii., and Malachi appear together in this order in vol. III. 177—230 (*E.T.* v. 36—86). Ewald's dates for Zech. ix.—xiv. cannot be accepted, but his work contains much that is stimulating and useful for the present day.

J. Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten übersetzt, mit Noten* ("Skizzen und Vorarbeiten," 5<sup>es</sup> Heft), Berlin, 1892. The notes on Haggai and Zechariah and Malachi occupy pp. 167—202. A collection of emendations and suggestions, not a finished book. There are also commentaries by W. Nowack, Göttingen, 1897 [and later]; K. Marti, Tübingen, 1904; Paul Riessler, Rottenburg a. N., 1911. All deal violently with the text, Marti more so than Nowack, and Riessler more than Marti.

B. Duhm comments on Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi in his *Anmerkungen zu den Zwölf Propheten*, in *Z.A.T.W.* for 1911, pp. 107 ff., 161 ff., 178 ff., 189 ff. Like his predecessors he proposes many emendations of the text. But so corrupt a text as Riessler and Duhm presuppose would be past mending.

Gustav Hölscher, *Die Profeten*, Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte Israels, Leipzig, 1914. Contains much on heathen Ecstasy and Soothsaying, which illustrates some of the phenomena of Prophecy in Israel. Pages 332—358; 447—453 deal specially with Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

§ 9. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

- Aquila = The literal translation of the O.T. into Greek executed by the Jewish proselyte Aquila in the second century A.D.
- Arch. (Archaeol.)* = *Archaeology* or *Antiquities of the Jews*, i.e. the well-known work of Josephus.
- B.D.B.* = The Oxford *Hebrew Lexicon* by Brown, Driver, and Briggs (1906).
- Camb. Companion* = *Cambridge Companion to Biblical Studies* (1916).
- D.B.* = Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (1898— ).
- E.V.* = The English versions of 1611 and 1885, when they agree.
- Encycl. Bibl.* = *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (1899—1903).
- Ginsburg = *Liber duodecim Prophetarum revisus* a C. D. Ginsburg, LL.D. London (B.F.B.S.), 1910.
- H.G.H.L.* = *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* by George Adam Smith.
- L.O.T.* = *Literature of the Old Testament* by S. R. Driver (ninth edition, 1913).
- LXX = *The Old Testament in Greek* edited by H. B. Swete.
- M.T. = Masoretic Text, the standard Jewish text of the Hebrew Bible.
- P.E.F.* = Palestine Exploration Fund, usually with a reference to one of the *Quarterly Statements*.
- Pesh. = The Peshitta, the Syriac version of the Old Testament, made perhaps in the first or second century of our era. It shows marks of both Christian and Jewish influence.
- Symmachus = The translation of O.T. into Greek made by Symmachus who lived probably late in the second century A.D.
- Targ. = The Targum, a translation into Jewish Aramaic, well edited by P. de Lagarde (Lipsiae, 1872).

- Theodotion = The revised edition of the LXX issued by Theodotion an Ephesian, a Jewish proselyte, who is said to have lived under the emperor Commodus (180—192 A.D.). Theodotion's work is hardly an independent translation, as some reckon it.
- Vulg. = The Vulgate, St Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin, 383—405 A.D., carefully edited by Mich. Hetzenauer, Oeniponte, 1906.
- Z.A.T.W. = *Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* edited by K. Marti, Giessen.
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NOTE. The reference to angels (Zech. ii. 3; *al.*) and to Satan (Zech. iii. 1 ff.) have been supposed by some to be due to "Persian" or "Zoroastrian" influence exercised on the Hebrew religion after the Captivity. But the whole subject of such influence is very obscure. Those who wish to pursue it should consult J. H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism* (London, 1913), Lecture ix.

# HAGGAI

**I**N the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth <sup>1</sup> month, in the first day of the month, came the word

CH. I. 1—11. THE PROPHET'S SUMMONS TO THE JEWS TO TAKE  
THOUGHT FOR THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

1. *In the second year of Darius*] Darius became king in 521 B.C.; his second year would therefore correspond with 520—519 B.C. See the Introduction, § 5.

*Darius the king*] This is Darius son of Hystaspes who reigned 521—485 B.C. The title by which he is commonly known, "King of Persia" (cp. Ezra iv. 5) gives no notion of the huge extent of his dominions. He and his successors occupied a unique position in Western Asia, so that the Persian king was known to the Greeks (as to the contemporary Jews) simply as βασιλεύς, "the King." The fact that the son of Hystaspes is called simply "Darius the king" or merely "Darius" in Haggai and Zechariah (Hag. i. 1, 15; ii. 10; Zech. i. 1; *al.*) suggests the conclusion that the prophecies were redacted and provided with these headings at least before 424 B.C., when the second Darius, "Nothus," came to the throne. In 336 B.C. a third Darius, "Codomannus," became king of Persia.

*in the sixth month, in the first day*] The reason for this carefulness in giving an exact date appears from ch. ii. 18, 19. Haggai pronounces that the Jews' obedience to JEHOVAH will be rewarded *the same day* by JEHOVAH's blessing. Since the year began in Nisan (March—April), the sixth month, Elul, corresponds with August—September.

*came the word...by Haggai...unto Zerubbabel*] The striking form of this statement corresponds with Haggai's teaching as to the function of the prophet. The word of JEHOVAH does not come "to" Haggai, but "by" i.e. "through" Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the governor. Haggai is only the instrument, the voice, by which the Divine word reaches the ears of the man to whom it is sent.

The lawful destination of the word of JEHOVAH is the ruler (or in this case, the twin rulers, civil and religious) of Israel.

of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the

Thus it was an offence that Ahimelech the priest of Nob inquired of JEHOVAH for David on the occasion described in 1 Sam. xxi. 1—9; see especially 1 Sam. xxii. 10, 13. The Prophet as well as the Priest stood in normal circumstances in direct relation to the reigning prince as one of his officers; cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 11 ("Gad the prophet, David's seer"). It is therefore significant that the word of JEHOVAH should be addressed to both Zerubbabel and Joshua, for hence it appears how evenly balanced were the civil and religious powers. To the independent Jewish kings the high priest was no more than a subject, but the Captivity changed the conditions. The governor nominated by the Persian king, though he was of the house of David, was obliged to admit Joshua as a colleague.

*Zerubbabel*] He is described as "son of Shealtiel" (Greek, *Salathiel*), who acc. to 1 Chron. iii. 17 (if we may accept the R.V. rendering of a confused text) was a son of Jeconiah (Jechoniah, Jehoiachin), the last king of Judah but one. Zerubbabel was thus a prince of the house of David, and so an obvious leader for the exiles returning from Babylon. His name appears in the genealogy of our Lord (Matt. i. 12; see R.V.).

Zerubbabel was the leader of the captives who returned in response (though this is not expressly stated) to the decree of Cyrus (Ezra ii. 1, 2). He helped Jeshua (Joshua) to set up the altar of the God of Israel at Jerusalem, though the circumstances were threatening (Ezra iii. 2, 3). In the second year of his arrival in Judah he together with Jeshua laid the foundation of the temple (house) of JEHOVAH (Ezra iii. 8—13). With the concurrence of Jeshua again he rejected the claims of the half-heathen "people of the land" (i.e. the descendants of the colonists brought in by Esar-haddon, Ezra iv. 2) to assist in the rebuilding. The result was a formidable local movement of opposition, and work on the Temple was stopped "all the days of Cyrus...even until the reign of Darius" (Ezra iv. 5). In the second year of Darius the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to prophesy, and Zerubbabel with the help of Jeshua recommenced the interrupted work (Ezra iv. 24—v. 2). After further opposition the work was finished in the sixth year of Darius (Ezra vi. 15).

Did Zerubbabel preside over the completion of the much delayed work? The book of Ezra does not inform us. The prophet Zechariah promises indeed (Zech. iv. 9) that the hands of Zerubbabel shall finish the house, but there is nothing to show whether the promise was absolute, or whether the fulfilment of it depended on the faith and faithfulness of the governor. Cp. Zech. vi. 9—15.

The further question whether Zerubbabel is to be identified with "Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah" (Ezra i. 8, 11) cannot be



son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the

answered with confidence. Sheshbazzar received the vessels of the house of JEHOVAH from Cyrus and conveyed them to Jerusalem, when the exiles returned. It is probable (but not certain) that the vessels would be entrusted to the leader of the Jews, and there is no improbability in the suggestion that one man is called by two names in the book of Ezra, although no mark of identification is added. (The book of Ezra is a book of extracts, and is by no means complete as a record of the period it seems to cover.) A comparison of Ezra iii. 8, 10 (Hebrew document) with Ezra v. 16 (Aramaic document) is in favour of the identification, for the work of laying the foundations of the Temple is ascribed in the former passage to "Zerubbabel" and in the latter to "Sheshbazzar." But we cannot be quite certain that the same person is meant by "Sheshbazzar" in Ezra i. 8 and "Zerubbabel" in Ezra ii. 2.

*governor*] Heb. *paḥath* or *peḥāh*, pl. *paḥoth* or *paḥāwōth*. The word is foreign in Hebrew, and the title is given to Assyrian (2 Kings xviii. 24), Babylonian (Dan. iii. 2, Aramaic), and Persian officials (Neh. ii. 7, 9). The LXX sometimes gives the rendering, "satrap." This would be appropriate in some passages, e.g. in Ezra v. 3, "Tattenai the governor (ἐπαρχος) beyond the River," for Tattenai's province was probably one of the twenty satrapies of the Persian empire (Herod. iii. 89). But the ruler of a small province like Judah was no doubt subject himself to a satrap, so that the more general rendering "governor" is more suitable in the present passage. See 1 Kings x. 15, note (*Camb. Bible*).

*Judah*] It is not to be supposed that the Judah to which the exiles returned had remained politically unchanged during the Captivity. The Jews who returned from Babylon did not find their land with all its ancient boundaries waiting empty to receive them. On the contrary they had to settle down in the midst of a foreign population, the "people of the land" (Ezra iv. 4, *al.*), which no doubt outnumbered them. The Philistines (Ashdodites and others) had pressed into Judah from the west, the Ammonites and Moabites from the east, and the Edomites from the south. "Judah" was perhaps hardly more than a geographical expression denoting a land in which the Jews were now only a struggling minority. Whole villages which had been Jewish were Gentile in the days of Zerubbabel. Jerusalem and its environs alone represented the old Jewish state which had been ruled by the kings.

*Joshua*] Hebrew *Jehoshua*. In Ezra in the shorter form, *Jeshua* (Ezra ii. 2; iii. 2; iv. 3; *al.*) which corresponds better with the form Ἰησοῦς (*Jesus*) given in the LXX. See Zech. iii. 1—9a; vi. 9—15, with the notes.

<sup>2</sup> son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, <sup>1</sup>It is not

<sup>1</sup> According to many ancient versions, *The time is not come for the LORD's house &c.*

*Jehozadak*] Zech. vi. 11. The shortened form *Jozadak* is given in Ezra iii. 2, 8. The form *Josedech* (A.V. here and Zech. vi. 11) comes from the *Josedec* of the Vulgate (Ἰωσέδεκ, LXX).

*the high priest*] Lit., "the great priest"; 2 Kings xxii. 4; τὸν ἱερέα τὸν μέγαν (LXX). In early days the title was simply "the priest"; 2 Kings xi. 9; xii. 3. At a somewhat later time mention is made of "the chief (head) priest" and "the second priest"; 2 Kings xxv. 18.

2. *the LORD of hosts*] Heb. "JEHOVAH Zēbāōth," i.e. (literally translated) "JEHOVAH Hosts"; better, JEHOVAH the Almighty (or All-ruler). This double name, descriptive of the God of Israel, is characteristic of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, occurring more than 80 times in these three short books. Since the meaning of the title is not at once manifest, an expanded form is sometimes given, "JEHOVAH God of Zēbāōth (hosts)"; Amos iv. 13; *al.* But the two words are rather in apposition, "JEHOVAH who is Zēbāōth." The Zēbāōth or "Hosts" are according to Gentile thought, the Stars, the Powers of Heaven, but the Prophet denies their existence as deities by including them in the Name of the One God. He teaches that all the powers of the Universe which the heathen worshipped are in fact only manifestations of JEHOVAH. The translation of JEHOVAH Zēbāōth usually given by the LXX in the three Minor Prophets is κύριος παντοκράτωρ, i.e. κύριος is used to represent JEHOVAH the ineffable name, and παντοκράτωρ, "All-ruler," to teach that JEHOVAH exercises His providence over all the Universe. The double name is particularly suitable in Haggai and Zechariah, books which teach that God's good providence bends the nations to do His good will for Judah.

*It is not the time for us to come*] The last two words should rather be rendered **to come in**; cp. v. 14. The people do not wish to "come in" from their labour in their fields (cp. v. 9), and stay in the city of Jerusalem to perform the unremunerative work of building the Temple. It was the *sixth* month; there was still agricultural work to be done; and the Feast of Tabernacles which marked the completion of the harvest was not until the *seventh* month. The Prophet meets them on their own religious level, and tells them that there is a curse upon their every-day toil, because they neglect JEHOVAH's house. Probably the Jews were content with having set up an altar. To build the Temple was a heavy task in itself, and moreover the enterprise excited the jealousy and hostility of "the people of the land" (cp.

the time *for us* to come, the time for the LORD's house to be built. Then came the word of the LORD by <sup>3</sup> Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it a time for you your- <sup>4</sup> selves to dwell in your cieled houses, while this house

Ezra iii. 3). So for a while the Jewish sanctuary simply consisted of the sacred area on the Temple Mount with an altar erected upon it.

*the time for the Lord's house to be built*] We should probably read, *Nor is it the time*, etc. After *bo* ("come in") the small word *vělo* ("nor is it") seems to be lost from the Hebrew text. The translation "The time is not come" (A.V.) follows the LXX, not the M.T.

*the LORD's house*] The "House" was a sign that JEHOVAH dwelt permanently in the midst of His people, while an altar need mean no more than that JEHOVAH visited the spot from time to time to receive offerings and sacrifices. Cp. Jer. xiv. 8, "O thou hope of Israel, why shouldst thou be as a sojourner in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?"

3. *by Haggai*] Again not, *to Haggai*; cp. note on v. 1.

4. *cieled*] To *ciel* is to "line a building within with wood"; thus to put down a floor of timber, to panel the walls, and to put on a roof of rafters and boards are only different parts of the process of cieeling; cp. 2 Chron. iii. 5. The word is derived from the French *ciel* ("heaven") which was used in the sense of a *canopy* and also in the sense of the modern word "ceiling" (of a room); cp. Skeat, *Etym. Dictionary* s.v. *Ceil*, *Ciel*. In the description of the building of Solomon's temple great stress is laid on the fact that inside "all was cedar; there was no stone seen" (1 Kings vi. 9, 15, 18). Stone is in fact plentiful in Judah, while wood fit for building is scarce; a free use of timber in the construction of houses is therefore a mark of the rich or of the extravagant. The houses of the poor might be built almost without wood. Woolley and Lawrence in describing archaeological remains in the extreme south of Judah write thus: "A striking feature of the Byzantine houses is the absence of wood. Wooden floors there must have been, but even the smallest houses were floored with stone slabs and roofed by ponderous arches carrying a flagged ceiling; even the cupboards were niches in the wall with stone shelves" (*P.E.F. Annual*, 1914—5, page 34).

The point of Haggai's reproof is that the Jews will not be content with such modest stone houses for themselves, and yet they shrink from the labour of cutting and fitting timber for the house of the LORD.

*in your cieled houses*] The Heb. phrase leaves the emphasis on *cieled*. "Ye dwell in your own houses (while JEHOVAH has

5 lieth waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of  
 6 hosts: <sup>1</sup>Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and  
 bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink,  
 but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there  
 is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages  
 7 *to put it* into a bag with holes. Thus saith the LORD of  
 8 hosts: <sup>1</sup>Consider your ways. Go up to the <sup>2</sup>mountain,  
 and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take  
 pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Set your heart on your ways.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *hill country*

none!) and those houses are built with care for appearance  
 and for comfort!" Cp. Jer. xxii. 14, 15.

*this house lieth waste*] The foundations had been laid some  
 sixteen years earlier (Ezra iii. 10); Haggai points to these  
 beginnings in the words "this house."

5. *your ways*] Your actions and their results.

6. *and bring in little*] The cause of the scanty harvest is  
 explicitly stated in ch. ii. 17, "I smote you with blasting and with  
 mildew and with hail."

*there is none warm*] Cold is sometimes felt severely in Pales-  
 tine, especially on the high central ridge, and the need of warm  
 clothing is fully recognised. Snow is not unknown in winter,  
 and even when the days are hot, the nights may be cold; cp.  
 Exod. xxii. 26, 27; Ps. cxlvii. 17; Prov. xxv. 20; xxxi. 21.

*a bag with holes*] i.e. a worn-out money-bag which loses  
 that which is put into it. The Heb. word *çērōr*, "bag," is found  
 in Gen. xlii. 35, "*bundle of money*"; it means, strictly speaking,  
 something which is tied or bound together.

8. *Go up to the mountain*] Thus translated the words are  
 a command to go up to the mountain of the LORD's house, and  
 there begin the work of building, while the further injunction,  
*bring wood*, directs the workers to take up with them building-  
 wood (sycamore?) from the lowland (*shephelah*) where it was plenti-  
 ful (1 Kings x. 27; Isa. ix. 10). The reading of the margin, *Go up  
 to the hill country and bring wood*, means that the Jews are to  
 seek their building-wood in the hilly central district of Palestine.  
 With this agrees the LXX rendering, *and cut wood* (κόψατε  
 ξύλα) for *and bring wood* (M.T. = Pesh. and Vulg.).

*I will take pleasure in it*] i.e. I will accept it as an offering;  
 cp. Mal. i. 10, 13 where the same Hebrew word is translated,  
 "accept."

*I will be glorified*] Or, *I will get me honour*, as in Exod. xiv. 4,  
 "I will get me honour upon Pharaoh." Cp. Mal. i. 6 (referring to  
 neglect of the Temple service), "If then I be a father, where  
 is mine honour?"

Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did <sup>1</sup>blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that lieth waste, while ye run every man to his own house. There-<sup>10</sup>fore <sup>2</sup>for your sake the heaven is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed *from* her fruit. And I called for a <sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *blow it away*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *over you*

9. *and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it*] By this rendering our English versions (both A.V. and R.V.) no doubt intended to convey the sense that when the Jews gathered in their harvest, JEHOVAH's curse was upon it as it lay in store, and so it wasted away. But a better rendering of the Hebrew is, **And as often as ye brought an offering to the House** (i.e. to the house of JEHOVAH), **I did blow upon it** (i.e. I rejected it; LXX ἐξεφύσησα). The opposite notion of *accepting* an offering is expressed in Hebrew by the verb "to smell, inhale," as in Gen. viii. 21, "And the LORD smelled the sweet savour." The meaning of *v. 9 a* is that harvests were bad, and when the Jews besought JEHOVAH with offerings to grant better harvests, He did not accept their prayer.

*saith the LORD*] Here the Hebrew word for "saith" is the special term *nēûm*. It is used to introduce some message which is conceived as coming more directly from the Deity. It has been suggested that it properly means "whispereth."

*ye run every man to his own house*] Rather, **ye run every man for his own house**, i.e. ye serve your own interests. *Runners* (*vâçîm*) are servants who run before their lord's chariot, and service of God is described as a "running" in Ps. cxlvii. 15; Jer. xxiii. 21; cp. Rom. ix. 16, "him that willeth" (i.e. the master) ... "him that runneth" (i.e. the servant).

10. *for your sake*] The Hebrew preposition is here taken by R.V. (text) in a less usual sense; A.V., *over you*. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 23.

*the heaven is stayed from dew*] Better, **the heaven withholds of her dew**, i.e. does not give the copious dew on which the fertility of the soil largely depends; cp. Gen. xxvii. 28; Ps. cxxxiii. 3. The importance of the dew is well stated in *H.G.H.L.*, page 65: "The dews of Syrian nights are excessive; on many mornings it looks as if there had been heavy rain, and this is the sole slackening of the drought which the land feels from May to October."

*the earth is stayed from her fruit*] Better, **the earth withholds her fruit**.

11. *I called for a drought upon the land*] For "drought" (Heb. *horeb*) the LXX reads "a sword" (*ρομφαίαν*, Heb. *hereb*); cp. Ezek. xiv. 17. The reference is to the "sword of JEHOVAH,"

drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

a general term which denotes other Divine chastisements, e.g. pestilence (1 Chron. xxi. 12), besides the chastisement of war; see Zech. xi. 17 with note. If "drought" be retained, the words "drought upon the land,...and upon men" are an instance of *zeugma*.

*upon the mountains* (Or, *hills*)] Specially mentioned because the olives and the vines were grown upon them. The reduced territory of Judah comprised little besides hill-country.

*upon men*] There are several indications that the returned exiles felt painfully the sparsity of the Jewish population of Judah; see Neh. vii. 4; Ps. cxxvii. 3—5; cxxviii. 1—6; Zech. viii. 5.

*all the labour of the hands*] Cp. ii. 17.

#### 12—15 (Historical section). THE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE TO THE PROPHET'S SUMMONS.

The story is vividly told. The effect of Haggai's rebuke (*vv.* 4—11) is shown in the mental attitude of the people (*v.* 12), and afterwards in their acts (*v.* 14). The Jews with their leaders "hearkened to" the Prophet's words and received them reverently as from JEHOVAH (*v.* 12). Haggai, seeing this change of feeling, turns now from warning to encouragement. Encouragement was indeed needed. Solomon's temple had been built by a powerful king with the help of the king of Tyre, of Zidonian artificers, and of thousands of workmen (1 Kings v. 1—18). The work to which the Prophet called the people was difficult in itself, and moreover it would certainly arouse again the hostility of their neighbours, who had already stopped it once in the days of Cyrus (Ezra iv. 1—5). So Haggai now gives the Jews as the very words of the Angel of JEHOVAH the decisive assurance "I am with you" (*v.* 13). The message rings out like the *Immanuel* ("God with us") with which Isaiah had met the Assyrian danger (Isa. vii. 14). The apprehensions of the Jews were overcome; they hesitated no longer. They came in from their field work to labour on the rebuilding of the house of JEHOVAH (*v.* 14). The suggestion of some commentators (including J. Wellhausen) that *v.* 13 is a gloss is singularly hasty. So far from the verse being "unnecessary" it supplies the key to the story. Haggai's reproofs brought fear, but it was the Divine assurance of *v.* 13 which turned fear into willingness to work. Further it was by the message *I am with you* (*v.* 13)



Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people did fear before the LORD. Then spake Haggai the LORD's messenger in

that the LORD "stirred up" the spirit of Zerubbabel and Joshua (*v.* 14). That the Prophet should repeat *I am with you* (*ii.* 4) as a kind of watchword is only natural. The *Immanuel* of Isa. vii. 14 is repeated in Isa. viii. 10. Thus it is gratuitous to suggest that the important words of ch. i. 13 were taken by a glossator from ch. ii. 4.

For the textual fault of *v.* 13 see the note on the verse.

**12.** *Then Zerubbabel]* **And Z.** There is no indication of time. The date of the recommencement of the rebuilding is clearly given in *ii.* 10, 18 f. as "the four and twentieth day of the ninth month."

*obeyed the voice]* Better according to the literal meaning, **hearkened to the voice.** The obedience here described was a *mental* state; cp. the words which follow, "and did fear." The practical obedience of the people is shown in *v.* 14.

*and...did fear]* Cp. Mal. i. 6, "If I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD"; Jer. v. 22, "Will ye not tremble at my presence?" The Hebrew prophets frequently associate *fear* with *service* in their teaching; ideal obedience contains in it the element of fear or reverence. In the N.T. St Paul frequently insists on the duty of fear both towards God and towards man; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. vi. 5; Phil. ii. 12.

**13.** *Then spake Haggai...saith the LORD]* This verse is taken over unchanged from the A.V. More accurately rendered it runs, **Then spake Haggai the Angel of JEHOVAH by message of JEHOVAH unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith JEHOVAH.** But it is not to be supposed that such a title as "the Angel of the LORD" would be given to Haggai, when it is used so differently in the contemporary prophecies of Zechariah, and elsewhere in O.T. Thus in Zech. i. 11, 12; iii. 1, the Angel of the LORD is a mysterious figure who stands between JEHOVAH and men, making revelations from JEHOVAH through the prophet to men. This representation corresponds with the common use of the term in other books of the O.T., e.g. in the book of Numbers, in which the Angel of the LORD meets Balaam on his way to the king of Moab and rebukes him and warns him (Num. xxii. 22—27, *et passim*). (For "Malachi" as a possible name of a prophet see note on Mal. i. 1.) [A still closer rendering than that given above is, **And Haggai said, The Angel of JEHOVAH is here with a message of JEHOVAH for the**



the LORD's message unto the people, saying, I am with  
 14 you, saith the LORD. And the LORD stirred up the  
 spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of  
 Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak,  
 the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the  
 people; and they came and did work in the house of  
 15 the LORD of hosts, their God, in the four and twentieth  
 day of the month, in the sixth *month*, in the second year  
 of Darius the king.

**people, saying, I am with you, saith JEHOVAH.** The construction of the Hebrew adopted in this rendering is rare, but it has an exact counterpart in Ps. xlv. 12. For the sense cp. Zech. i. 8, 11 (the Angel of JEHOVAH present near Jerusalem). Against the suggestion that the verse is a gloss stands the fact that all versions have it.]

*I am with you*] Cp. ii. 4; Isa. vii. 14; viii. 10 (*Immanuel*, "God with us").

14. *And the LORD stirred up*] Stirred up i.e. by the message and assurance just given by the Angel of the LORD. As the "Angel of the LORD" is nothing else than a manifestation of the LORD the writer does not intend any change of subject when he passes from the term "Angel of the LORD" to "LORD" (JEHOVAH); cp. Zech. iii. 1, 2.

*the LORD stirred up the spirit*] The "spirit" (Heb. *rūah*) is that part of human nature which God "gave" (Eccl. xii. 7) and upon which He exercises unseen influence; thus acc. to Deut. ii. 30 JEHOVAH "hardened" the spirit of Sihon to resist Israel, and acc. to Ezra i. 1 He "stirred up" the spirit of Cyrus to issue an edict in favour of the Temple.

*all the remnant of the people*] The Jews of Haggai's day were only a small survival of the population which had occupied the territory of Judah before it was ravaged by the Assyrians (2 Kings xviii., xix.) and the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxiv., xxv.).

*and they came*] Better, **came in**, i.e. from their field work outside Jerusalem.

*did work*] Or, "performed service" (Heb. *mēlāchāh* a word connected with *mal'āch*, a messenger or angel).

15. *in the four and twentieth day etc.*] As printed in R.V. and in most editions of A.V. this date belongs to the event described in v. 14, the commencement of the work of Temple-building. The Hebrew text however has a full stop (*sōph pāsūḳ*) at the end of v. 14, and careful editions (e.g. Ginsburg's of 1910) show a division of paragraphs between vv. 14 and 15. This treatment is no doubt intended to mark the verse as giving an erroneous date for the resumption of work on the Temple. The true date (*ninth month*) is preserved in ch. ii. 10.

In the seventh *month*, in the one and twentieth *day* 2 of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of 2 Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this 3 house in its former glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes as nothing? Yet now be strong, 4 O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts, <sup>1</sup>*according to the word* 5

<sup>1</sup> Or, Remember *the word* &c.

CH. II. 1—9. A PROMISE THAT THE FUTURE GLORY OF THE TEMPLE SHALL BE GREATER THAN ITS PAST GLORY.

This passage is intended to encourage the Jews to build by giving a promise of greater glory for the re-edified temple. The word "glory" would no doubt make Haggai's hearers think of material glory, "barbaric pearl and gold" brought by the nations as offerings. Yet the Prophet does not promise these things, but only "glory," a word which means spiritual things, as for instance when it is ascribed to God Himself. As this "glory" is not defined in any way it is best to interpret it according to the analogy of prophetic language in reference to the glory which comes to JEHOVAH from the adhesion of the Gentiles to Him.

1. *In the seventh month etc.*] This particularity in specifying dates (cp. i. 1; ii, 10, 20) is due to the care with which Haggai was watching events and to the confidence with which he expected an amelioration of the condition of the Jews within a very short time; cp. v. 6.

2. *governor*] Heb. *paḥath*; see note on i. 1.

*the high priest*] Heb. as in i. 1; see note there.

3. *in its former glory*] Cp. Ezra iii. 12, 13. The Temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. Few who had seen it would survive to 536 B.C., the date of the event described in Ezra iii. 8—13. Fewer still would be alive in 520 B.C. when Haggai uttered these words.

4. *be strong*] Cp. Josh. i. 6.

*saith the LORD*] The word "saith" three times repeated in the verse is three times represented in Heb. by *nēūm*; cp. i. 9, note.

*I am with you*] Cp. i. 13.

5. *according to the word*] In the Heb. the construction is

that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt,  
 6 and my spirit <sup>1</sup>abode among you: fear ye not. For  
 thus saith the LORD of hosts: Yet once, it is a little  
 while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and  
 7 the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations,  
 and <sup>2</sup>the desirable things of all nations shall come, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *abideth*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the things desired* (Heb. *desire*) of all nations shall come

broken, and the phrase abrupt, but the general sense is clear: JEHOVAH will be with Zerubbabel because of his ancient promise to Israel at the Exodus.

*and my spirit abode among you*] For *abode* render **stayed** or **continued**. The pillar of fire by night and cloud by day was the sign of this continued presence; Num. ix. 15—23; cp. Num. x. 33—36. See also Isa. lxiii. 12—14.

6. *I will shake the heavens*] “I will make the heavens quake,” i.e. with fear or agitation because of the Divine manifestation which is coming; cp. Ps. xcvi. 4; xcix. 1; *al.* Because the whole Universe is one, Heaven and Earth share in any mighty convulsion; cp. Isa. xxiv. 21; Joel iii. 15, 16; *al.*

7. *and I will shake all nations*] Cp. vv. 21, 22. The shaking arouses the nations; cp. Zech. i. 15 (“the heathen,” A.V.; “the nations,” R.V.).

*nations*] Heb. *goyim*; LXX τὰ ἔθνη. The A.V. varies in its rendering: “nations, heathen, Gentiles”; R.V. prefers “nations,” but sometimes gives “heathen” (e.g. Ps. lxxix. 1, 6, 10) and sometimes “Gentiles.” “The Hebrew word *goyim* ‘nations’ which is applied to the nations of Canaan dispossessed by the Hebrews and then also to the surrounding nations among whom the people of Israel were afterwards dispersed, acquired in later times a moral<sup>1</sup> significance, which is represented in the Authorised Version by the rendering ‘heathen’ or ‘Gentiles.’ While recognising this moral sense of the word the Revisers have employed it much more sparingly than their predecessors had done.” (Preface to R.V.) Accordingly R.V. changes “heathen” in Hag. ii. 22; Zech. i. 15 and “Gentiles” in Zech. i. 21 into “nations.” In Mal. i. 11 R.V. has “Gentiles” (*bis*). In the N.T. τὰ ἔθνη is similarly treated by the English translators; i.e. A.V. has “nations, heathen, Gentiles,” while R.V. gives “nations” in many places, but “Gentiles” (not “heathen”) when the nations are contrasted with the one chosen people, the Jews; e.g. Gal. ii. 2, 8, 9, 12, 14.

*the desirable things of all nations shall come*] Better (cp. A.V.) **the desired** (lit. “desire,” Heb. *hemdath*) **of all nations shall**

<sup>1</sup> The word “religious” would apply equally well.

I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.  
The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD 8

**come**, i.e. those of the nations whom JEHOVAH desires (or "chooses") shall come to worship in the new temple. (For the cognate Heb. verb, "to desire," see Ps. lxxviii. 16 [17]; Isa. liii. 2.) This interpretation is in strict agreement with the context, "I will shake all nations," i.e. *arouse* them, "and so those nations whom JEHOVAH desires (and draws) shall *come*." So in Dan. x. 11 Daniel is called a "man greatly *desired*," i.e. a man in whom JEHOVAH has pleasure. The promise is not universal but special as that of Haggai's contemporary, Zechariah, "Many nations shall join themselves to JEHOVAH in that day" (Zech. ii. 11). The thought that the Temple is to be glorified by the concourse thither of "many nations" is found also in Isa. ii. 2—4, and is expressed vividly in the promise of Isa. lvi. 7, "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples." With this view agrees the rendering of the LXX, τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, if it be translated as it well may be, "the elect [nations] of all the nations."

The rendering of R.V. "the desirable things of all nations shall come" is unlikely to be right; indeed in the context it is a bathos. JEHOVAH will shake all nations and (not they themselves, but) their gold and silver will come to the Temple! In the Hebrew the verb "come" is in the plural, whereas the singular would be more appropriate, if the reference were indeed to bullion. The Revisers of 1885 were probably influenced by the fact that the older German Hebraists, Maurer, Gesenius, and Ewald, accepted this interpretation. The thought of precious things for the adornment and furnishing of the Temple is not introduced until v. 8, where it stands in its proper place. *First*, JEHOVAH will shake (or arouse) all nations; *next*, those nations which He chooses will come to worship at the restored temple; *next again*, as to the adornment of the Temple, let the Jews be satisfied with JEHOVAH's assurance that there shall be *such* silver and gold for His house as He Himself desires to see there, and that the latter glory of the House shall be greater than the former.

The versions are unsuccessful in dealing with this passage. Targ., Pesh., "They shall *bring* the desire (i.e. treasure) of all nations," is a loose paraphrase. Vulg., *veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus*, translates a Heb. plur. verb as though it were singular. St Jerome seems to have taken "the desire of all nations" as a description of Messiah.

*I will fill this house with glory*] By drawing many nations into it for worship. God's glory is seen in his captives; Ps. lxxviii. 18.

8. *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine*] All things belong to JEHOVAH, and therefore it matters little that the new house

- 9 of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.
- 10 In the four and twentieth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD
- 11 by Haggai the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying,

is poor and mean in comparison with the former house (ii. 3); cp. Ps. l. 9, 10, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, Nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is *mine*, And the cattle upon a thousand hills." The LORD looks for obedience and willing service in building, but not for worldly magnificence. The call in i. 4, 8 is for *timber* and for personal service to prove that the Jews are at least as zealous in their care for the house of JEHOVAH as for their own dwellings. Cp. Isa. lxvi. 1, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what manner of house will ye build unto me?"

9. *The latter glory of this house shall be greater*] Haggai here assumes the continuity of the "second" temple with Solomon's; cp. v. 3, "Who is left among you that saw this house in its *former glory*?" The coming glory of which the Prophet speaks consists of the thronging of the Gentiles to worship in Zion, and of the universal peace which is to have its centre there; cp. Isa. ii. 2—4. The prediction may rightly be applied to the growth of the peaceful kingdom of Christ among the nations of the world.

- 10—19. THE PROPHET TEACHES THAT THE PEOPLE WERE UNCLEAN AND THAT THEIR SACRIFICES WERE NOT ACCEPTED WHILE THE TEMPLE LAY WASTE. NOW THEY SHALL RECEIVE BLESSING.

On the very day (the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month) on which work on the Temple was resumed Haggai came forward with fresh assurances. Up to this day the Jews had been an unclean race, and so unblest by God. Now by their obedience their uncleanness was removed, and JEHOVAH's blessing on all the works of their hands was secured.

10. *In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month*] Cp. vv. 18, 19.

*by Haggai*] For this reading (if it be right) see i. 1, note, but twenty-one Heb. MSS (Ginsburg) together with LXX (πρὸς Ἀγγαῖον) read, *to Haggai*.

11. *Ask now the priests*] Cp. Mal. ii. 7. It was a special duty of the priesthood to teach the people to distinguish "between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean," when they came as worshippers to offer sacrifice (Lev. x. 8—11; Deut. xxiv. 8, 9). The sacrificer must himself be

If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and <sup>12</sup> with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it become holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that <sup>13</sup> is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it

"clean" and his offering must be "holy." "Cleanness" and "Holiness" in this case were ritual states depending on details with which the priests alone were familiar.

*Ask...concerning the law*] Rather, **Ask...for a decision** (Heb. *torah*). The Heb. word *torah* which is often used in the phrases "the Law of Moses" and "the Law of the LORD" comes from the verb *hōrāh*, "he showed" or "he pointed out," and so it has the meaning of "teaching" or "direction, guidance," on questions of religion, whether moral or ceremonial. It is so in Mal. ii. 7. The command, "Ask" is addressed to Haggai himself.

12. *holy flesh*] i.e. flesh offered in sacrifice; cp. Lev. vii. 15. In the case of the peace offering (Heb. *shelem*) the greater part of the flesh of the victim was eaten by the sacrificer and his household. Those who were present at the sacrifice would wear *clean* garments, and so might take away "holy flesh" wrapped up in a corner of the garment. It is not likely that the reference is to the sin offering, the special holiness of which is described in Lev. vi. 25—27.

*meat*] Heb. *maāchāl*, "food" as in Gen. ii. 9.

13. *one that is unclean by a dead body*] Among the Hebrews contact with a dead body involved a temporary uncleanness which brought serious disabilities with it. In Num. v. 2, 3 the Israelites are commanded to put out of their camp all lepers and unclean persons and also "whosoever is unclean by the dead." It is clear that such a law of separation was observed in later times, for Tobit after burying the Jewish stranger did not enter his house, but "slept by the wall of [his] courtyard, being polluted" (Tobit ii. 9). Uncleanness for the dead might be contracted in several ways, and by other persons beside those who prepared the corpse for burial and laid it in the tomb. Thus every person who happened to be in the tent when any one died in it became unclean, and any one who touched a grave (cp. Matt. xxiii. 27) or the bone of a dead man in the open field (Num. xix. 14, 16). Even the person who performed the ceremony of purification for the unclean became unclean himself until the evening (Num. xix. 21). Things as well as persons became "unclean for the dead" and needed purifying (Num. xix. 15, 18). Whatsoever the unclean person touched became itself unclean. The ceremony of purification took place on the third day after the uncleanness had been contracted, but the disability was not removed till the evening of the seventh day (Num. xix. 19).



be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall  
 14 be unclean. Then answered Haggai and said, So is this  
 people, and so is this nation before me, saith the LORD;  
 and so is every work of their hands; and that which  
 15 they offer there is unclean. And now, I pray you,  
 consider from this day and upward, from before a stone  
 was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:  
 16 <sup>1</sup>through all that time, when one came to an heap of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *since those days were.*

14. *So is this people*] There is a "dead thing" among them, though Haggai from a sense of reverence does not expressly say so, but there is no doubt that he is thinking of "JEHOVAH'S house that lieth waste" (i. 9). As long as it lies waste it communicates uncleanness to Israel.

*this people...this nation*] LXX ὁ λαὸς οὗτος...τὸ ἔθνος τοῦτο. This first word "people" is a natural designation of Israel as "the people of God." The second word "nation" is introduced to suggest blame; it describes Israel as one of "the nations." She is unclean like the Gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη).

*that which they offer*] Better, **that which they used to offer.** Notice the "And now" of the following verse.

*there*] Haggai means, "on the site of the *house that lieth waste.*"

15. *consider*] Lit., "apply your heart" as in i. 5, 7. *from this day and upward*, i.e. "from this day backward." The Jews are to consider the immediate Past.

*the temple*] Heb. *hēychāl*; so also v. 18; Zech. vi. 12, 13, 14, 15; viii. 9. In the O.T. two designations are used of the Temple of Jerusalem: (1) common in Hag., Zech. and generally in O.T.—"House" (*bayith*, *bēth*) a general term for the place where JEHOVAH made his name to dwell (2 Sam. vii. 5; 1 Kings v. 5; viii. 13); (2) less common in O.T.—"Temple" (*hēychāl*), properly speaking the outer and larger hall of the Temple through which the Holy of Holies was reached, but also used in Hag., Zech. and elsewhere in O.T. of the Temple as a whole. *Hēychāl* comes from *ē-kal*, "great house," an Assyrian (or Sumerian) term applied to the palaces of the Assyrian kings; similarly in Dan. iv. 1, 26 [4, 29] the Aramaic form of the word is used of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar.

16. *through all that time*] The text of the Hebrew is uncertain. LXX has *ῥίves ἡμε*, which perhaps represents a Heb. reading *mah hēyīthem*, "how did ye fare?" Taken with v. 15 (as the last words of that verse) it might be rendered, "Consider... how ye fared."

*an heap of twenty measures*] i.e. an heap which might be expected to contain twenty measures.



twenty *measures*, there were but ten; when one came to the winefat for to draw out fifty vessels, there were but twenty. I smote you with blasting and with mildew <sup>17</sup> and with hail in all the work of your hands; yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD. Consider, I pray you, <sup>18</sup> from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth *month*, since the day that the foundation

*winefat*] LXX ὑπολήνιον as in Mark xii. 1, "a pit for the winepress." It was a pit hewn out of the rock which received the juice of the grapes when they were pressed. The word "fat" belongs to Middle English and is still used in the North of England. "Vat" acc. to Skeat is Southern English, probably Kentish.

For an illustration showing a winepress with its vat see *D.B.*, vol. iv. page 869.

*fifty vessels*] "Vessels" is printed in different type in some editions of R.V., as though there were nothing to represent it in the Hebrew. The Heb. text however has "fifty *purah*," which is reproduced in A.V. as "fifty vessels out of the press," a well nigh impossible rendering, even if it be right to translate *purah* by "press." No doubt the Revisers intended the general word, "vessels," to represent *purah*, just as Targum gives "bottles," Vulg. *lagenas*, and LXX μετρητάς. A *metretes* was about 9 gallons.

17. *blasting*] A result brought about by the hot east wind, the well-known *Scirocco* or *Sharkiyah*; cp. Gen. xli. 6; Hos. xiii. 15. The wind comes from the desert of Arabia, and might equally well be described as a "south wind" (νότος), as in Luke xii. 55.

*hail*] "Hail is common and is often mingled with rain and with thunderstorms" (*H.G.H.L.*, page 64). Violent hailstorms are mentioned in Josh. x. 11; Ps. xviii. 12 [13]; Isa. xxviii. 17; xxx. 30.

18. *since the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid*] Better, **since the day that the LORD'S temple was founded (or begun)**. The reference is to the day on which the people "came and did work in the house of the LORD" (i. 14), which appears from this passage to have been the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. The work done was not the laying of the foundation stone, i.e. it was not the very beginning of all. From one point of view it may be said that the foundations were laid in the days of Cyrus (Ezra v. 16; cp. Ezra iii. 10, 12), from another it is probable that the foundations of Solomon's temple were left undestroyed by the Chaldeans on account of the great size of the stones (see 1 Kings v. 17 note, *Camb. Bible*) and so were used by the post-exilic builders. The importance of the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month lay in

19 of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree hath not brought forth; from this day will I bless you.

the fact that the work which had been stopped for sixteen years was on that day begun again. For the general promise given in vv. 18, 19, cp. Zech. viii. 9—13.

19. *Is the seed yet in the barn?*] i.e. "Is there still any of your former store left in the barn?" An answer of a negative kind is expected: "Very little, if any" (cp. v. 16).

*yea, the vine...hath not brought forth*] This is a paraphrase, but the general sense of the original is well given. The Prophet passes on from a general reference to scarcity to a particular mention of the failure of the harvest of wine, fruits, and oil. The depletion of stocks *extends*, he says, to the produce of the vine, fig-tree, pomegranate, and olive, of which, he says, "there hath been no harvest" (cp. i. 11) or, more literally, "One hath not *carried*" (i.e. carried home a crop; cp. Ps. cxxvi. 6).

The Prophet speaks in the ninth month (*Chislev*) when there were still four months to wheat harvest, which took place in *Nisan*, the first month. Wine and fruit harvest began later, and was not finished until the beginning of the seventh month (Lev. xxiii. 39). Roughly speaking *Chislev* may be taken as November—December, *Nisan* as March—April.

*the vine,...fig tree,...pomegranate,...olive tree*] These were the chief fruit trees of Palestine in O.T. times; cp. Num. xiii. 23; Deut. viii. 8; Joel i. 12. In the last passage the date palm is added, and also the "apple tree" (*tappūah*), but it is improbable that the apple tree is really meant. At the present day oranges grow well in Palestine, and it is possible that these (and not apples) are the *tappūah* of the Heb. Bible; cp. Prov. xxv. 11.

*from this day will I bless you*] The blessing is to be expressed, no doubt by seasonable and moderate showers, which bring fertility and avert epidemics. "Till the end of November the average rainfall is not large, but it increases through December, January, and February, begins to abate in March, and is practically over by the middle of April. The *latter rains* of Scripture are the heavy showers of March and April" (*H.G.H.L.*, page 64). The writer of these notes remembers the apprehensions expressed at Jaffa in Feb. 1895 owing to the rainlessness of the preceding January. "We shall have sickness," said one, "unless we get rain quickly." Sickness (cholera) came within a fortnight. Haggai in speaking in December was speaking at a critical time of year. His promise would be brought quickly to the test of facts.

And the word of the LORD came the second time unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth: and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will

20—23. ZERUBBABEL SHALL BE FAVOURED AND PROTECTED BY JEHOVAH DURING A GREAT WORLD-CONVULSION.

In the terrible disorders of the Persian empire Haggai assures Zerubbabel of safety and favour for himself and implicitly for the people whose head he was. The early troubles of Darius seem to have fallen out to the advantage of the Jewish people; see note on *v.* 22.

20. *the word...came...unto Haggai*] *Cp. v. 10.* The ordinary form in this book is "by Haggai"; *i. 1*, note.

21. *I will shake*] *Lit., I am shaking.* The allusion is no doubt to the convulsions of the Persian empire in the earliest years of Darius, when province after province sought to establish its own independence. *Cp. Introduction, § 5.*

22. *I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms*] The language of this prediction is deliberately generalized. The verse describes accurately the general state of the "Persian empire" in the early years of Darius. For some years the throne of Cyrus and Cambyses lay overthrown. The Empire fell to pieces. Darius did not "succeed" to the kingdom, but rather he had to re-make it, at first by constant wars, and afterwards by wise administrative measures. The convulsions of the Persian empire turned out to the advantage of the Jews. Darius was anxious on the one hand to conciliate the Jews as subjects who had not "rebelled," and on the other hand he was anxious to take up again the work of Cyrus. So he confirmed the edict of Cyrus that the Temple should be rebuilt.

*every one by the sword of his brother*] The early wars of Darius were in part true *civil* wars. The provinces of Persia and Media revolted against him, and had to be subdued by Medo-Persian armies.

23. *my servant*] Perhaps the title is here quasi-Messianic; *cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.*

make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.

*as a signet]* Cp. Jer. xxii. 24. In the vision of Rev. i. the jewels of the signet ring are represented by stars (Rev. i. 16, 20). Haggai promises complete safety.

*I have chosen thee]* Cp. Isa. xlv. 2. The choice of Zerubbabel involves the choice of the Jews. JEHOVAH chooses Israel again; Isa. xiv. 1.

## ZECHARIAH

**I**N the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, <sup>1</sup> came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, the prophet, saying, The <sup>2</sup> LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of <sup>3</sup> hosts: Return unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and

CH. I. 1—6. ZECHARIAH'S APPEAL TO THE JEWS NOT TO HARDEN THEIR HEARTS AFTER THE MANNER OF THEIR FOREFATHERS.

1. *In the eighth month*] Haggai began to prophesy two months earlier (Hag. i. 1). Thus the order of the names "Haggai and Zechariah" (Ezra v. 1; vi. 14) is chronological.

*Darius*] In vii. 1 "king Darius"; see Hag. i. 1, note.

*the son of Iddo*] Cp. Ezra v. 1; Neh. xii. 16. In 2 Chron. ix. 29; xii. 15; xiii. 22 appeal is made to writings of a certain Iddo "the seer" or "the prophet" for the reigns of Solomon, Rehoboam, and Abijah. Thus it is not improbable that Zechariah had prophetic ancestry. From Neh. xii. 16 it is probable that he was of a priestly family. It is to be noted that in the case of Haggai no genealogy is given.

2. *hath been sore displeased*] Better, **was indeed displeased** (or **wroth**). The stress is not on the degree of displeasure, but on the fact of it. JEHOVAH was displeased with His own people, Israel.

3. *the LORD of hosts*] Cp. Hag. i. 2, note.

*Return*] The Heb. word (*shûb*) is translated "repent" in A.V. in 1 Kings viii. 47 ("turn again," R.V.) and in Ezek. xiv. 6; xviii. 30 ("return," R.V.); the literal meaning is "return"; metaphorically it signifies a change of conduct. A different word (*niham*) is used in viii. 14, where a change of *feeling* and *purpose* is meant. As the substantive "way" is used metaphorically in Hebrew in the sense of "conduct," any change of conduct

4 I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Return ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the  
 5 LORD. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets,  
 6 do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? and they turned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

is very suitably described as a "turning" or "returning"; cp. Jonah iii. 10.

*and I will return]* JEHOVAH promises a change of conduct towards the Jews; He will cease to punish them, and begin to favour them; cp. vv. 16, 17. The language is anthropomorphic, as in vv. 14, 15.

4. *the former prophets]* The prophets who lived before the Captivity, especially perhaps Micah and Jeremiah who both predicted judgement on Jerusalem in the clearest terms; see Jer. xxvi. 1—6; 17, 18.

*they did not hear, nor hearken]* Judah did not obey, nor make any effort to obey. This statement is sufficiently illustrated by the historical passages of the book of Jeremiah. The few instances there recorded of willingness to hear (Jer. xxvi. 16; xxxvi. 25; xxxvii. 17) avail only to throw into clearer relief the general apostasy of the Jewish state.

5. *Your fathers, where etc.]* This ver. is to be read in connexion with that which follows. Zechariah points out that those who uttered JEHOVAH's message regarding the old Jerusalem and those who received it have vanished from their places, but the truth of the Divine words is attested by the present fallen state of the city and its surroundings.

6. *my statutes]* Better, **my decrees**; cp. Ps. ii. 7 where the same Heb. word is translated "decree."

*which I commanded my servants]* i.e. "which I made known to my servants the prophets, charging them to make them known to the people."

*they turned]* i.e. to consider the ways of God. This turning is something less than repentance, but it is a step towards it.

*thought]* Rather, **purposed, resolved**; Heb. *zāmam*, as in viii. 14, 15.

## 7—VI. 8. EIGHT VISIONS.

Eight visions are described in this section as follows:

- i. 7—17. FIRST VISION. The Heavenly Horses.
- 18—21. SECOND VISION. The four horns and the four smiths.
- ii. 1—13. THIRD VISION. The rejected measuring line.
- iii. 1—10. FOURTH VISION. The restoration of the High Priest.
- iv. 1—6 a: 10 b—14. FIFTH VISION. The two olive branches, The promise to Zerubbabel.
- v. 1—4. SIXTH VISION. The roll flying.
- 5—11. SEVENTH VISION. The ephah carried on wings.
- vi. 1—8. EIGHTH VISION. The mission of the Heavenly Horses accomplished.

These visions are distinguished from such visions as those of Isa. vi. 1 ff.; Jer. i. 11—16; Ezek. i. 1—iii. 15 by the fact that they were shown and interpreted to the prophet by an angel-mediator. Zechariah does not begin (like Isaiah) with the bold words, "I saw the LORD"—"The LORD said unto me." The post-exilic prophet has a guide, an angel speaking within him (cp. i. 9, note); this angel makes him see the visions, challenges him to understand them, and finally explains them, or at least founds some spiritual lesson upon them. The whole narrative reminds the reader of *Pilgrim's Progress* of Christian at the house of the Interpreter.

The visions are of the nature of parables, or similitudes. The story told or suggested by any one of them is of the slightest. Few or none of the details can be treated as significant. Thus in the first vision the horses are described as *red*, *sorrel*, and *white* (i. 8), but no meaning is attached to these colours, when the vision is interpreted. (In the eighth vision the same horses reappear but with chariots added to them.) In the second vision figure and matter of fact are strangely conjoined; "horns" are put to flight by smiths ("carpenters"). The third vision embraces just one slight incident which is used to introduce an assurance of Divine protection for Jerusalem. The description of the fourth vision passes insensibly into a prophetic address to the high priest and to the people. The narrative of the fifth vision and its interpretation is interrupted by a passage of direct assurance addressed to Zerubbabel. In short Zechariah shows himself throughout not as a Seer but as a Prophet whose visions serve only as illustrations of his message. The visions are slight and incomplete in the telling, but the word of the LORD is delivered plainly and with authority.

The eight visions are to be regarded as forming one series, enclosed (as in a frame) by the first and the eighth. These two visions of heavenly horses of divers colours agree in portraying the general providence of JEHOVAH over the four quarters of the earth. They agree further in announcing the chastisement



of Judah's oppressors: "They (i.e. the horses) that go toward the north country have quieted (i.e. appeased) my spirit in the north country" (vi. 8; cp. i. 15).

The historical situation supposed by these visions is that of the beginning of the reign of Darius. The Persian king after crushing Gaumâta or Bardiya (Pseudo-Smerdis) in Media, passed the Tigris, defeated Nidintu-Bel the claimant to the Babylonian throne in two battles, and captured Babylon. He thus repeated *circa* 520 B.C. the achievement which Cyrus had performed in 538 B.C. in chastising the "north country" (cp. ii. 6, note). After this capture of the capital of Western Asia Zechariah might well say, "All the earth sitteth still, and is at rest" (i. 11), for though Darius speaks in the Behistun Inscription of a series of revolts which followed, yet most of these occurred in lands remote from Judah, and great Babylon itself remained for a long time in the firm grasp of Darius. As we see from Ezra vi. 1, 2, communication between Judah and Babylon and Ecbatana was maintained, and this could hardly have been the case, if the confusions of the Persian empire at this period were as great as they are sometimes said to have been.

In the first vision Zechariah starts from the capture of Babylon by Darius as the sign that stability had been given again to the Persian empire, so that the interrupted work of rebuilding (permitted by Cyrus) might be resumed. The earth is quiet and at peace again, and the Prophet draws from the vision the conclusion that JEHOVAH is watching jealously over the welfare of His people and that He has the merciful purpose of restoring the Temple of Jerusalem and re-establishing the ruined cities of Judah.

Then follows the second vision which shows the manner of the restoration of the Temple. The work is done by peaceful means. Four craftsmen (well called "carpenters" in A.V.) come on the scene, and their mere appearance puts to flight the hostile powers which desire to stop the work. The advent of the "carpenters" whose business it is to finish the work by panelling the House warns the enemy that the Jews are thoroughly in earnest and intend to complete all that has been begun (cp. Hag. i. 4, 8). Before this display of resolution the "horns" are put to flight.

The third vision is concerned with the future of Jerusalem. When Zechariah prophesied, it was for the most part a "city of the dead," largely in ruins and sadly depopulated (Zech. i. 16; ii. 6; viii. 4—6). Its restoration was an exceptionally difficult task, for it was to a large extent an artificial city. It had no natural advantages to encourage a return of prosperity. It was situated on a lofty ridge approached by steep and winding roads. It was poorly supplied with water. Patches of fertile soil in the neighbourhood were few and small. There was no economic reason why Jerusalem should be built at all.

The true reason for the rebuilding of the city was religious.

City and Temple had for centuries been bound together in a common fate; the house of JEHOVAH could not fitly stand among the ruins of the houses of his worshippers. The "peace of Jerusalem" was the best symbol that could be displayed of the LORD's favour towards His people. So the third vision is chiefly to be regarded as the vehicle of the Divine promise that the restoration of the city shall happily follow the rebuilding of the Temple. Jerusalem in her new prosperity shall burst the bounds of her ancient walls with her multitude as well of beasts (Jonah iv. 11) as of men. JEHOVAH will prove His favour by protecting His citizens without the aid of walls.

From the restoration of the Holy Place the visions pass on to the ordering of the re-established Jewish state. The fourth vision (which in logical order and perhaps also in order of time follows the fifth) offers a fresh covenant to the high priest Joshua on condition that he and his house observe a greater faithfulness to the Divine "charge."

Logically the fifth vision precedes the fourth, dealing as it does in general with the respective positions of Zerubbabel and Joshua in the restored state. Moreover it is the fifth vision which shows the spiritual support of this new order. The Prophet sees a golden seven-branched "candlestick," which represents JEHOVAH. This unearthly candlestick needs no fuel itself, but upon it is a bowl which supplies oil to two olive-trees which stand beside it. These trees represent the Jewish people, while two branches or "spikes" represent Zerubbabel and Joshua the heads of the new commonwealth. The Jews are encouraged (and warned) to trust themselves to both these leaders, because both are "sons of oil," i.e. both are the recipients of a spiritual anointing. They are compared to the olive-branches of their native hills growing up in peace before JEHOVAH under the blessing of the rain which He sends. So Zerubbabel and Joshua are commissioned to rule over their countrymen in stillness and peace by spiritual power: "Not by an army, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD."

In the fourth vision the promise of Divine favour is qualified by a condition: Joshua and his fellow priests must on their part show themselves faithful. The disaster which had befallen Judah seventy years before (i. 12) was a punishment for sin, and Zechariah in all his outlook on the future is conscious of the danger that fresh sin may wreck the restored community (i. 2—6; iii. 1—7; vii. 4—14). So the sixth and the seventh visions deal with the sin and the guilt of the Prophet's contemporaries.

The sixth vision shows how sin may be punished without a fresh disaster to the nation. The individual, or at least the individual with his family, is to feel the full weight of the penalty. A roll of record broad and long is kept, and according to what is written upon it, it enters into each guilty house, the house of the thief and the house of the perjurer, and destroys it utterly.

Thus sin is destroyed out of the community, and the community can be acquitted.

The acquittal of the community is shown in the seventh vision. The woman called Wickedness who is carried off in the ephah to the land of Shinar (i.e. to southern Babylonia) represents the guilt of Judah removed far from her. It is an illustration of Ps. ciii. 12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Further the building of the house for Wickedness in the land of Shinar represents the transfer of guilt from Judah (cleansed by the punishment of her guilty individuals) to Babylon which has still to undergo her punishment.

The eighth of the visions closes the series and repeats in the main the lesson of the first. It teaches that JEHOVAH's spiritual messengers pervade the whole world and in particular that they patrol Judah in order to keep it safe. In the north country JEHOVAH's purpose has been accomplished, i.e. the nations which oppressed Judah have been chastised.

A different rationale of the Visions has been put forward by Prof. A. van Hoonacker (*Petits Prophètes*, pp. 579 f.; and previously in *Nouvelles études sur la Restauration juive*, p. 80). According to this view the eight visions describe the providence of JEHOVAH over the Jews sometimes from a standpoint in the past, sometimes from the Prophet's present. Thus in the first vision Zechariah sees the conditions which prevailed shortly before 538 B.C. In the second he sees the hope of return from exile hindered for a time by Cyrus's overthrow of the Babylonian empire. In the sixth vision the Prophet is carried further back than ever into the past; he is made aware of the Divine curse pronounced against his guilty nation during the latter days of the kingdom, which caused its removal to Babylon. The seventh vision symbolically describes the Babylonian Captivity as an expiatory punishment. The eighth recalls the chastisement inflicted on Babylon, and so brings the reader again to the Prophet's own present.

### 7—12. THE FIRST VISION.

The Prophet sees "a man"—afterwards identified with the ANGEL OF THE LORD (v. 11)—who is mounted upon a red horse. He is halting in a deep glen, just outside Jerusalem yet retired from observation. There he receives reports from other horsemen who have returned from riding up and down in the earth. They announce that all is quiet; there is no outward sign of any change in the affairs of the nations, such as the Jews hoped would tell in their favour. So the Angel appeals to JEHOVAH Himself: When will He show mercy upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah which have now lain under His wrath for "seventy" years? Then the word of the LORD comes to the Prophet full of comfort

Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh 7 month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, the prophet, saying, I saw in the night, and behold a man riding 8 upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the <sup>1</sup>bottom; and behind him there were

<sup>1</sup> Or, *shady place*

for His people. The vision is only slightly constructed, it is nothing more than a frame intended to set forth the decisive assurance: *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it*, saith the LORD of hosts (v. 16).

7. *Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month*] The latest date given in the book of Haggai is the four and twentieth day of the *ninth* month (Hag. ii. 20; cp. v. 10). Haggai had then spoken of the prospect of a great political upheaval; Zechariah two months later records that no change has yet come: "the whole earth sitteth still and is at rest" (v. 11).

*Shebat*] This is the Assyrio-Babylonian name of the eleventh month; it is found in 1 Macc. xvi. 14; cp. ch. vii. 1, where *Chisleu*, the name of the *ninth* month is given.

*came the word of the LORD...saying, I saw*] "The word of the LORD" is not given immediately, in fact not till vv. 14—17.

Ver. 7 is probably intended as the heading to one of the longer sections of the book, e.g. i. 8—ii. 13, or even i. 8—vi. 8. The next heading containing the phrase, "The word of the LORD came unto [Zechariah]" does not come until vi. 9.

8. *behold a man riding*] Or, "behold one riding." The person intended is the Angel of the LORD, appearing in human form. Cp. Jud. xiii. 9 ff. The Angel has arrived just outside Jerusalem; when the Temple is rebuilt He will enter it.

*among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom*] "The myrtle (*Myrtus communis*) is an evergreen shrub usually from 3 ft. to 4 ft. high. Occasionally in moist soil it attains a height of 8 ft." (G. E. Post in Hastings' *D.B.* iii. 465). Myrtles are found still in the glens about Jerusalem. *Bottom* is an old English word having the sense of "valley." The Heb. word *mēçûlāh* was understood by our translators to mean a *deep moist place*; such places are found in the water-courses round Jerusalem. This is the more probable explanation of the word, but if it be read with other vowels, i.e. as *mēçillah*, it answers to the rendering "shady place" in R.V. marg. (cp. *τὴν κατασκίον*, LXX). The word so pronounced however occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible.

Whether Zechariah refers to some particular spot in the environs of Jerusalem cannot be known, for the definite article

("the bottom") is idiomatic in Hebrew and proves nothing: the sense is "in one of the myrtle-glens."

But if no particular spot is meant, it is right to assume in the absence of any indication to the contrary, that the scene of the Prophet's vision is in general the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the district familiar to him and to his audience. Indeed the definite assurance of ver. 16, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies" is difficult to explain on any other hypothesis. The Angel of JEHOVAH is seen by the Prophet close to the city, though concealed from the eyes of ordinary men.

A different view is offered by B. Duhm (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1911, page 162 ff.). With the German passion for uniformity he tries to assimilate the description of the first vision (chap. i.) to that of the eighth vision (chap. vi.). *First*, he maintains that the same scene is laid for both visions. To support his view he is reduced to emend the Heb. text. In vi. 1 the chariots of vision proceed "from between the two mountains, the mountains of bronze." These two bronze mountains form, Duhm tells us, the mythological gate of heaven. It is indeed quite likely that Zechariah in vi. 1 derived his conception from the Babylonian representation of a mountain pass through which the sun enters at sunrise. But in i. 8 the man on the red horse, the central figure of the vision, stands "among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom." This *bottom* (Heb. *mēçûlāh*) according to Duhm can be nothing else than the Gulf, the χάσμα μέγα of Luke xvi. 26, which separates earth from heaven. This identification is however a pure guess, and Duhm quotes no passage in favour of the mythological sense of *mēçûlāh*. The word is used in fact in connexion with terms of ordinary geography. It is applied in the plural to the Nile in ch. x. 11, and to the gulf of Suez (*Yam sūph*) in Exod. xv. 5. In the singular it is used of the sea on which the ships are tempest tost (Ps. cvii. 24), and of the marsh where the Psalmist is in danger of sinking (Ps. lxxix. 2 [3, Heb.], "I sink in the mire of a *mēçûlāh*"). Even in Job xli. 31 [23, Heb.] where "the deep" is mentioned as the haunt of leviathan, *leviathan* means the "crocodile," and *mēçûlāh* is to be understood literally, as some sheet or stream of water in which the creature submerges itself.

To complete the assimilation of the scenery of the first vision to that of the eighth Duhm perversely reads *hārīm*, "mountains" for *hādassīm*, "myrtles" in i. 8, 10, 11. In favour of this emendation he appeals to the LXX (τῶν ὀρέων), but his preference flouts two well-known principles of textual criticism: (1) that the reading which agrees with a parallel passage is unlikely to be right; (2) that the harder reading is to be preferred to the easier. Acc. to (1) *hārīm* should be rejected; acc. to (2) *hādassīm* should be preferred, for the word is rare, while *hārīm* is one of the commonest words in the Hebrew Bible. Duhm defends himself by the hypothesis that a later hand wishing to transfer

horses, red, sorrel, and white. Then said I, O my lord, 9 what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the 10 man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the 11 angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.

the vision to Jerusalem (!) altered an original *hārīm* into *hādassīm*. But are there no "mountains" near Jerusalem (Ps. cxxv. 2)? Nor again is the mention of *myrtles* enough to fix the Holy City as the locality. Myrtles grow in other places also in the Holy Land. Duhm's hypothesis is most improbable. The Targum reads "among the myrtles" but renders *mēçūlāh* by "Babylon."

Duhm on the hypothesis of one scene for both visions proceeds to explain their relation thus. In the first vision the heavenly "post *chariots*" (*sic*) return from their journey with unfavourable news; in the eighth they go forth again with happy expectations. This view is unnatural. Practically it ignores the assurances of vv. 16, 17 to which the first vision leads up. The first vision read in its context is favourable for Judah.

*horses, red, sorrel, and white*] Cp. vi. 2 f. where horses of four different colours are mentioned. The prophet does not attribute a particular significance to each colour, but the difference of colour suggests a difference in the task assigned to each group of horses. In vi. 2 f. some horses go northward and some go southward, while others again patrol in "the land."

9. *the angel that talked with me*] Rather, **the angel that spake within me** (LXX, Pesh., Vulg.). So vv. 14, 19, *al.* In ii. 3 and v. 5 this angel is conceived as changing his mode of looking and manifesting himself in action while the Prophet looks on.

*I will shew thee*] Not, "I will tell thee." The Prophet gains the answer to his question from the scene itself which he is allowed to witness in vv. 10—13, and from the words which he overhears.

10. *to walk to and fro*] LXX περιδεύσαι, "to patrol." Cp. Job i. 7 where Satan is represented as a kind of inspector under the authority of JEHOVAH.

11. *And they answered*] The subject is "the horses" described in v. 8. Perhaps they are supposed to have *riders* upon them, but in a vision animals can speak.

*all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest*] The early years of Darius were disturbed by successive "rebellions" in almost every part of the Empire in turn, but no doubt at the time of Zechariah's



- <sup>12</sup> Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had  
<sup>13</sup> indignation these threescore and ten years? And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good  
<sup>14</sup> words, *even* comfortable words. So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and

visions the reports which reached the Prophet were peaceful. Such reports however were evidently not encouraging to the Jews as a body. They wanted some outward sign from JEHOVAH before they addressed themselves to the serious work of rebuilding the Temple, and possibly even Haggai the prophet sympathized with this wish (Hag. i. 2; ii. 21). Zechariah has no sign to give them, but he declares to them instead the encouraging word of the LORD which he received in vision.

12. *the angel of the LORD*] Clearly distinguished in this verse from JEHOVAH Himself. "In this intercession of [the] angel on Israel's behalf we may, perhaps, see the beginning of the doctrine of patron angels, representing particular peoples, which meets us later in a more developed form in the book of Daniel (Dan. x. 21; xii. 1)." S. R. Driver (*in loco*).

*on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah*] Zechariah's interest is not confined to the rebuilding of the Temple; it is extended to the fortunes of the Jewish people as a whole; cp. vv. 17, 21; ii. 12; vii. 2; viii. 13—15.

*against which thou hast had indignation*] The same Heb. verb as in Mal. i. 4.

*threescore and ten years*] From the second year of Darius (520—519 B.C.) to the destruction of the Temple (586 B.C.) is rather less than seventy years. "Threescore and ten" is a round number.

### 13—17. JEHOVAH GRANTS TWO COMFORTABLE WORDS TO THE PROPHET.

13. *answered the angel that talked with me*] We should expect to read, "answered the angel of the LORD," yet, since the message was meant for the Prophet, it is quite probable that the received reading is right.

14. *Cry thou*] The Prophet is now given the "comfortable words" that he may proclaim them abroad.

*I am jealous for Jerusalem*] Or, "I am zealous for J." Cp. Isa. ix. 7.

*for Jerusalem and for Zion*] Cp. v. 17; ii. 4, 10; viii. 3, 4. Zion is properly the south-eastern hill on which David built his city (2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Kings viii. 1), which by further building



for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore <sup>15</sup> displeased with the nations that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they <sup>1</sup>helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the LORD: I am returned <sup>16</sup> to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith <sup>17</sup> the LORD of hosts: My cities <sup>2</sup>through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *helped for evil*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *shall yet overflow with prosperity*

became merged in the larger unit Jerusalem. The name *Zion* was however further applied to the Temple hill which lay to the north (Ps. xlviii. 2 [3]; lxxviii. 68 f.) and ultimately to the whole capital city, so that it became a synonym of *Jerusalem*.

15. *very sore displeased*] A similar Heb. phrase to that in v. 2 (see note).

*the nations that are at ease*] The reference is not to any great world power, e.g. Persia, but to the immediate neighbours of the Jews, specially perhaps Tyre and Edom, who gained advantages from the Chaldean overthrow of Jerusalem.

*that are at ease*] Arrogant through their sense of superiority and security; cp. Isa. xxxii. 11; Amos vi. 1.

*they helped forward the affliction*] Cp. Ezek. xxv. 3 ff.; 8 ff.; 12 ff.; 15 ff.; xxvi. 2 ff.; Obad. 10—14.

16. *I am returned*] Cp. v. 3 with notes.

*my house*] Cp. Hag. i. 2, with the note.

*a line shall be stretched*] This phrase means, "preparations shall be made for building"; cp. Job xxxviii. 5. By a bitter irony the phrase slightly varied (e.g. "line of confusion"; "line of Samaria"; Isa. xxxiv. 11; 2 Kings xxi. 13) can be used of preparations for destruction.

17. *My cities*] Cp. v. 12 with notes.

*through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad*] Better as marg.; so Vulg., *adhuc affluent civitates meae bonis*.

*the LORD shall yet comfort Zion*] Cp. Isa. xl. 1, 2.

## 18—21. THE SECOND VISION.

The first vision contains two assurances: (1) that JEHOVAH is displeased with the nations; (2) that JEHOVAH's house shall be rebuilt. The second vision takes up these assurances and enforces them with simple imagery of "horns" and "smiths" ("carpenters"). Once the "horns" (the nations) had put Judah to flight, but now the tables were turned. The Temple-builders—

18 And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four  
 19 horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me,  
 What be these? And he answered me, These are the  
 horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.  
 20 And the LORD shewed me four smiths. Then said I,  
 21 What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These

mere artificers—in carrying out JEHOVAH's will would put the nations to flight. The notion of armed force is excluded; cp. iv. 6. The mere steadfastness and the fearlessness of the Jews would strike fear into their foes; cp. Neh. vi. 16.

18. *four horns*] A horned animal is a not uncommon figure in the O.T. for a strong military power; Num. xxiii. 22 (R.V., of Israel); Deut. xxxiii. 17 (of Joseph); Dan. viii. 3, 4 (of the Medo-Persian empire). But in the present passage of Zechariah the vision is barely sketched, not described, and the horns are put not inappropriately for the horned beasts, which represent the hostile tribes which surrounded the Jewish community. The horns are *four* in number because Jerusalem was threatened from all four points of the compass. On the north were the Samaritans (Ezra iv. 1, 2; Neh. ii. 10; iv. 1, 2); on the east the Ammonites (Jer. xlix. 1; Neh. ii. 10; iv. 3); on the south the Edomites (Ps. cxxxvii. 7); on the west the Tyrians and Philistines (Zech. ix. 2—7).

19. *the horns which have scattered*] No doubt the Chaldeans carried away thousands of the Jews into captivity in Babylonia, but the allusion here is rather to the neighbours of Judah who forwarded the work of depopulation begun by Nebuchadrezzar; cp. v. 15. Thus the Tyrians sold many of the Jews beyond the sea (Joel iii. 3—6), and the Edomites carried off captives under cover of the Chaldeans (Obadiah 11). There were exiles in Syria, Egypt, and the Mediterranean lands as well as in Chaldea (ii. 6).

*Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem*] Judah, the people among whom Zechariah dwelt; *Israel*, the people to whom JEHOVAH Himself had given a name (Gen. xxxii. 28); *Jerusalem*, the city which JEHOVAH had chosen. The Prophet does not regard "Israel" (the Ten Tribes) as lost, or absorbed in the heathen but only as scattered; cp. viii. 13 (note); x. 6—10.

20. *four smiths*] Or, "four carpenters" as A.V. The Heb. *hārāshim* means "artificers" or "craftsmen" (2 Kings xxiv. 14, 16). They are not warriors, but men qualified to take a leading part in rebuilding the Temple, whether by working in wood or by making bars and bolts of bronze or iron. They are "four" in number to signify that they (like the horns) come from the four quarters of the compass. The vision conveys a promise which is clearly expressed in vi. 15, "they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD."

are the horns which scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast down the horns of the nations, which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold a man <sup>2</sup> with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither <sup>2</sup> goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length

21. *to fray them*] Not simply "to terrify them" (American Standard Version), but "to frighten them away"; cp. Jer. vii. 33 (same Heb. verb). The hostile neighbours will not dare to interfere, when they see helpers for the building coming from north, south, east, and west. The work will be done by *peaceful* means; "not by an army, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts" (iv. 6, R.V. marg.). *To fray them* is probably an editorial note to explain the difficult expression which follows. See next note.

*to cast down the horns*] "to cast out," A.V. The verb is rare and its meaning is uncertain; but the general sense is clear: the craftsmen will frighten away all who would hinder their work, and will accomplish their task of rebuilding. The best illustration of the Prophet's words is to be found in the account of Nehemiah's wall-builders (Neh. iv. 13—23; cp. Neh. vi. 15, 16). Driver's statement that "the vision symbolizes the destruction (*sic*) of the heathen powers which had oppressed Israel" misses the point. The special mention of "carpenters" shows that the prophet is thinking rather of the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

## CH. II. 1—5. THE THIRD VISION.

The second vision announced Victory for the carpenters, the third announces the Freedom and Enlargement which are the results of victory. Both teach that these ends are to be obtained by moral and spiritual means, and not by violence. While the second vision asserts that the victory will be won by artificers (not fighters), the third denounces the notion that Jerusalem is to depend for safety on a rebuilding of her former mighty walls. Both together teach that JEHOVAH will bring victory and safety to Jerusalem in His own way; cp. iv. 6.

1. *a man with a measuring line*] In v. 4 he is called a "young man." There is nothing to suggest that an *angel* is meant. It is a *human* thought that of course Jerusalem must be measured to see what length of wall it needs.

2. *To measure Jerusalem*] A depressing task. Its condition must have been very much what it was in the days of Nehemiah: "the city was wide and large; but the people were few

3 thereof. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, 4 and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall <sup>1</sup>be inhabited as villages without

<sup>1</sup> Or, *dwell*

therein, and there were no houses builded" (Neh. vii. 4). Few probably (if any) of the cieled houses to which Haggai (i. 4) refers were built in Jerusalem itself.

3, 4. *behold, the angel* etc.] Rather, **behold, the angel that spake within me went forth** (i.e. became visible), and **another angel came out** (i.e. appeared) **to meet him, so he said**, etc. By the Heb. verb *yaça*, "went forth," "came out," the Prophet means, "became visible, appeared" (*erschien*, Ewald; *apparat*, van Hoonacker). Zechariah, who claims inspiration through an angel from i. 9 onwards, now sees his teacher revealing himself in vision. For the first *yaça* LXX gives *ιστήκει*, which might represent a Heb. reading *niççab*, but it is more probable that the Greek translators mistook the force of *yaça* and substituted a different verb for it. The repetition of the same word in the Heb. text is in agreement with the simple style of the early chapters of Zechariah.

4. *Speak to this young man*] Rather, **to the young man yonder**. The Heb. pronoun *hallāz* ("this" E.V.; *ἐκεῖνος* LXX) is more subtle in meaning than *this* or *that*; it suggests in fact the middle distance; it is used of the Philistine drawing near from the other side of the valley (1 Sam. xvii. 26 a), and of the Shunammite approaching Mount Carmel (2 Kings iv. 25). Zechariah is made to overhear the message destined for the man (young man) with the measuring line.

*Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls*] These words suggest a definite policy of peaceful reconstruction; cp. i. 20 (note); iv. 6. As long as the city walls were not repaired and Jerusalem did not become again one of the strongest fortresses in Palestine, the neighbours of the Jews could not reasonably feel any apprehensions of danger arising from the recovery of Judah. On the other hand a strongly fortified Jerusalem would appear (like a medieval castle) a serious menace to the surrounding population. The policy of Zechariah was followed for some sixty years, if we may so conclude from the lack of evidence to the contrary. At the end of that time Nehemiah reversed it and built the walls of Jerusalem, but this measure (if justifiable in itself) was followed by a decisive breach with the Samaritans and the other neighbours of the Jews: Neh. iv. 1, 2; xiii. 28. *villages without walls*] Cp. Ezek. xxxviii. 11. The Medes are said to have lived *κατὰ κώμας* before their first king Deioces

walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall 5 of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho, flee from the land of the north, saith 6 the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. Ho Zion, escape, 7 thou that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For 8 thus saith the LORD of hosts: <sup>1</sup>After glory hath he sent

<sup>1</sup> Or, *After the glory, he hath &c.* <sup>1K</sup>

made them build the seven-walled city of Ecbatana (Herod. i. 96 ff.).

*of men and cattle therein]* Ancient cities contained space for cattle; cp. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 13; Jonah iv. 11; Ps. cxliv. 13.

5. *a wall of fire]* Cp. ix. 8; Isa. iv. 5; Num. ix. 15, 16.

*I will be the glory]* Rather, **I will be for glory.**

*the glory]* Cp. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11; Isa. vi. 1—3.

#### 6—9. AN INVITATION TO THE EXILES TO RETURN.

6. *flee from the land of the north]* "The land of the north" describes somewhat loosely and yet vividly the regions into which Israel and Judah were led captive by the Assyrians and the Chaldeans respectively. Many captives were deposited in north Syria (Hamath; ix. 2; Isa. xi. 11), while others were carried further to the north-east into Assyria (Mesopotamia; x. 10; Isa. xi. 11) and Media (2 Kings xvii. 6), or south-east into Babylonia (2 Kings xxiv. 15, 16; Jer. xxix. 4, 28) or south Babylonia (Shinar; Isa. xi. 11). Still northern Syria remained a typical land of captivity, for thither in the first instance all these captives were taken.

*for I have spread you abroad]* **Though I have spread.** Either the Heb. particle *ki* ("for") is used in the sense of "though," or *gam ki* (= "though") should be read here. Let the Jews in spite of their dispersion have courage to gather themselves together and to return.

7. *Ho Zion, escape]* The appeal is made to those who were by descent inhabitants of Zion to return and do their duty to their city and temple. The appeal is of the nature of a prediction.

8. *After glory hath he sent me]* Rather, **After glory! He hath sent me.** The ordinary rendering (both A.V. and R.V.) is wrong because (1) it ignores the fact that the words, *After glory*, are the words which the prophet attributes to JEHOVAH; (2) it ignores the pause which is marked in M.T. after the words, *After glory*. *After glory* (Or, *Follow my glory!*) is to be understood as a motto (or war-cry) given by JEHOVAH to his people

me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that  
 9 toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold,  
 I will shake mine hand over them, and they shall be  
 a spoil to those that served them: and ye shall know  
 10 that the LORD of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice,

to hearten them for the great enterprise to which he calls them in the two preceding verses, i.e. an exodus from Babylon. (A similar war-cry is found in Jud. v. 14, "After thee, O Benjamin.") "Glory" (Heb. *kābōd* without the article) stands for the Glory of JEHOVAH, as in Ps. cxlix. 5, "Let the saints exult in Glory!" The returning exiles are to follow, as their fathers at the Exodus followed the pillar of cloud and fire (Exod. xiii. 21).

*the nations which spoiled you*] Rather, **the nations which would spoil you.** Zechariah here, as in i. 21 *fin.*, is looking to present danger, not past distresses. In both passages present participles are used, signifying that the action is not past, but present or imminent.

*he that toucheth...his eye*] Vulg. has *oculi mei*, "my eye," as though God Himself, and not the Prophet, were speaking. This reading seems to bring the Vulgate into relation with the Hebrew textual tradition known as *Tikkun Sophērim*. Acc. to this tradition, as variously given by different Heb. authorities, there are seven (*or* eleven, *or* eighteen) passages of O.T. which were emended or treated euphemistically by the *Sopherim*. Obscure language is used by the authorities, but it is usually interpreted to mean that the present reading of M.T. is due to the *Sopherim*, i.e. "Scribes," very early guardians and transmitters of the text, and *not* to the original writers. In the present passage the suggestion is that an original reading *my eye* has been altered into *his eye*. The former reading of course could only refer to JEHOVAH, whereas the latter is ambiguous. *His eye* might indeed mean the LORD's, but it is possible to interpret it of the assailant's own eye: "He that touches you does it at his own peril." That there was some confusion in Heb. MSS in early days between two readings, *his eye* and *my eye*, is probable enough, but an authoritative alteration of the latter into the former is an extremely improbable hypothesis. Other instances of *Tikkun Sopherim* are found Mal. i. 13; iii. 8.

9. *I will shake mine hand over them*] Cp. Isa. xi. 15. Zechariah here and elsewhere attributes the overthrow of Judah's enemies directly to JEHOVAH. He does not suggest any armed triumph of the Jews themselves.

#### 10—13. A PROMISE OF THE FUTURE DESTINY OF JERUSALEM.

10. *Sing and rejoice*] Cp. ix. 9 a parallel and yet different passage which announces the coming of a lowly king to Zion.



O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations 11 shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah as his 12 portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD: for he is waked up 13 out of his holy habitation.

11. *shall join themselves to the LORD*] The Heb. verb is the same as in Isa. xiv. 1, "The stranger (or "sojourner") shall join himself with them." The thought is of proselytes being taken into the Jewish community.

*and I will dwell*] Heb. *wē-shākanti*. The Heb. verb has a technical sense; it describes JEHOVAH as dwelling by means of the Tabernacle or of the Temple among His people. *Mishkān* is the name used in Exod. xxv.—xl. and in the book of Numbers for the Tabernacle considered as the dwelling of JEHOVAH. The well-known later Heb. word *Shēkīnah* (*Shechinah*) denoting the Divine Presence comes from the same root.

12. *shall inherit Judah*] This special mention of Judah suggests that Israel remains disinherited; no return is promised for the northern tribes.

*the holy land*] This, though a common English phrase, is rare in the Bible. "Holy mountain" is commoner; Isa. xi. 9; xxvii. 13; *al*; cp. Isa. lxiv. 10 ("holy cities").

*shall yet choose Jerusalem*] Cp. i. 17.

13. *Be silent*] Cp. Exod. xiv. 14; Hab. ii. 20 (R.V. marg.).

*he is waked up*] Ps. xlv. 23; Isa. li. 9. As long as the earth "sat still and was at rest" (i. 11), it seemed as if JEHOVAH slept.

*his holy habitation*] The same Heb. phrase as in Deut. xxvi. 15; Ps. lxxviii. 5 [6].

### CHS. III.—VI. THE ORDER OF THE TEXT.

The text of chs. iii.—vi. does not appear to be arranged in a strict order whether of time or of subject. In this fact there is nothing to surprise the student of the O.T. According to analogy it is unlikely that Zechariah's prophecies were written down immediately after delivery. Probably the Prophet was satisfied for a time with treasuring in memory his visions and the Divine messages which accompanied them. On these reminiscences he would draw in teaching his disciples, as occasion served. His words would be committed to writing by his disciples perhaps before his death, perhaps after it. No ideal arrangement of his



utterances is to be expected. In fact the more orderly the arrangement, the less likely the book would be to represent the actual course of the delivery of the Prophet's words. Zechariah would not utter his prophecies in a form ready for publication in a book. To carry out his mission to his countrymen he had to speak by "here a little and there a little." Most probably the present arrangement of his prophecies follows neither the simple order of time, nor the logical order of subjects.

One difficulty, widely felt by modern students, arises from the position of iv. 6 *b*—10 *a*, verses which come between a vision and its interpretation. Wellhausen (1892) thinks that they are the sequel of iv. 14, van Hoonacker (1908) places them after iii. 10. Probably a larger re-arrangement of the text is necessary for the proper understanding of chs. iii.—vi. In the first place after ii. 13, "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD," there comes a pause and the whole action of the book stays. But the signal that the period of silent waiting is at an end is given not in iii. 1, which immediately follows, but in iv. 1, "And the angel came and waked me as a man *that is wakened out of his sleep*." Further the vision of ch. iv. and the words of warning of iv. 6 correspond more closely than anything in ch. iii. with the promise and the warning of ch. ii. 10—13. In ii. 10, JEHOVAH gives the promise, "I will come and I will dwell in the midst of thee," while in iv. 2, 3, the candlestick of seven lamps (representing JEHOVAH) stands between the two olive trees which represent the Jewish people. The charge of ii. 13, "Be silent before the LORD" is echoed in the warning of iv. 6, "Not by an army, but by my spirit, saith the LORD." Further Wellhausen is perhaps right in assigning iv. 6 *b*—10 *a* to a place after iv. 14. Ver. 10 *b* seems to follow vv. 4—6 *a* very suitably. The question of iv. 4, "What are these, my lord," finds an appropriate answer in 10 *b*, "These seven are the eyes of JEHOVAH."

We thus get the following arrangement. Immediately after ii. 13 follows:

iv. 1—6 *a* (As far as, *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying,*);

10 *b*—14 (Beginning, *These seven are the eyes of the LORD*);

6 *b*—10 *a* (Beginning, *This is the word of the LORD, and ending, the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel*).

The last words of the passage as re-arranged are, "For they, whosoever they were, who despised the day of small things, shall [soon] rejoice and see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel." The two olive-branches (v. 14) have already been explained as standing for two favoured representatives of the Jewish people.

For Zerubbabel as one of these two the Prophet has further honour to announce, but he is careful to avoid touching the susceptibilities of the Persian government. Zechariah dropping the

name of Zerubbabel and putting forward the person of the high priest, announces the future greatness of the prince of the house of David in cryptic utterances. The further exaltation of Zerubbabel is half-revealed, and half-concealed in two striking passages:

- (a) iii. 1—9 *a* (Vision of the Purification of Joshua);
- (b) vi. 9—15 *a* (Symbolic action of crowning Joshua).

In both these passages the prince is introduced under cover of the high priest, but the Shoot is to be higher in dignity than Joshua.

If these two parallel passages are to be placed in order of time, vi. 9—15 *a* as fuller and more explicit, is perhaps to be reckoned the later. On the other hand it is possible that the two passages have a very close connexion, and are practically to be regarded as one. But in any case iii. 1—9 *a* has a very apposite sequel in ch. v. After the cleansing of Joshua comes the cleansing of the land (v. 1—4), and the removal of its guilt (v. 5—11) to the land of Shinar. Upon the mention of Shinar would follow very naturally the Divine assurance given in iii. 9 *b*, 10, "And I will search out the iniquity of *that* land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree." "That" land is the land of Judah's great oppressor and its sudden punishment gives a sense of security to Israel. The eighth vision (vi. 1—8; of the four chariots) conveys the same message of re-assurance; the great enemy has been chastised and the spirit of JEHOVAH, zealous as it is for Judah, has found rest. Thus the whole passage (iii.—vi.) ends on the note that all shall be well. The general scheme of the re-arrangement is as follows:

- iv. 1—6 *a* (As far as, *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying,*);
- 10 *b*—14 (Beginning, *These seven are the eyes of the LORD*);
- 6 *b*—10 *a* (Beginning, *This is the word of the LORD, and ending, the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel*);
- iii. 1—9 *a* (Ending, *saith the LORD of hosts*);
- vi. 9—15 *a* (Ending, *hath sent me unto you*);
- v. 1—11;
- iii. 9 *b*, 10 (Beginning, *and I will remove*);
- vi. 1—8.

### CH. III. 1—9 *a*. THE FOURTH (Fifth) VISION.

This may be called a double vision. The first part of it (*vv.* 1—5) promises to Joshua all the glory of a high priest. The second (*vv.* 6—9 *a*) promises in addition the grant of priestly access to the presence of JEHOVAH, but on condition that JEHOVAH's charge is kept. What this charge is, is not expressly stated, but it is sufficiently indicated by the context. Greatly favoured as Joshua is, there is yet Another who is destined by

- 3 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and <sup>1</sup>Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

<sup>1</sup> That is, *the Adversary*.

the LORD to stand above the high priest. Joshua must acknowledge the higher claims of him whom JEHOVAH designates as "my servant the Shoot" (v. 8). Logically this vision, the *fourth* in order according to our present text, should follow that which now stands *fifth* (iv. 1—14). The latter passage indicates in general terms that Zerubbabel is to be the Restorer of the Temple, while iii 8 going beyond this gives him the quasi-Messianic title, "the Shoot." vi. 13 proceeding still further speaks outright of the "throne" destined for the Shoot.

1. *the angel of the LORD*] The next verse shows that this is a paraphrase signifying the LORD himself.

*Satan standing at his right hand*] Cp. Ps. cix. 6, "And let Satan ("an adversary" R.V.) stand at his right hand." In Zech. (also in Job i., ii.) the word *Satan* has the definite article (*ter*); in the Psalm and also in 1 Chron. xxi. 1 there is no article. In English we might render, "the Accusing Angel," and "an accusing angel" in these two cases respectively. The Anglicized word *Satan*, being used as equivalent to "the Devil," is an unsuitable rendering, for in Hebrew *Satan* has not the associations of the English word. The *Satan* is an official of the court of Heaven whose duty it is to prosecute; he acts under the orders of JEHOVAH. He is an adversary of men, not of the LORD. LXX in Zech. and Job, ὁ διάβολος.

2. *the LORD*] LXX Κύριος simply, but Pesh. gives "the angel of the LORD" as in v. 1. See note there.

*The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan*] Before the Accuser can begin his accusation, his mouth is stopped, and Joshua is declared acquitted. The priest is soiled with the smoke, but delivered from the flame of the fire. His acquittal represents JEHOVAH's renewed acceptance of the priesthood after he had rejected it at the destruction of the Temple: 2 Kings xxv. 18—21. The quotation in Jude 9 is to be referred not to this passage, but to some apocryphal writing, perhaps the *Assumption of Moses*, of which only a fragment is known to survive.

3. *filthy garments*] No doubt filthy *priestly* garments are intended. The Heb. word *bēgādīm*, though it bears a general meaning, is used four times over in such a passage as Exod.

And he answered and spake unto those that stood before 4 him, saying, Take the filthy garments from off him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel. And <sup>1</sup>I said, Let them set a fair <sup>2</sup>mitre 5 upon his head. So they set a fair <sup>2</sup>mitre upon his head,

<sup>1</sup> According to some ancient authorities, *he said*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *turban* Or, *diadem*

xxviii. 2—4 for the priestly garments. Moreover it is implied in *v.* 5 that Joshua was wearing a filthy priestly mitre. The vision rests on the conviction that the priesthood itself is polluted and needs cleansing.

*stood*] i.e. as an accused person: cp. Josh. xx. 9; Matt. xxvii. 11; Acts xxiv. 20.

4. *And he answered and spake*] JEHOVAH responds to the occasion—not to any words recorded here—and pronounces judgement for the accused. The same Heb. verb is used similarly in 1 Sam. ix. 17 (“the LORD *said* unto him,” A.V.; “answered him,” R.V. marg.); 2 Kings i. 11; Job iii. 2, R.V.

*those that stood before him*] His attendants; cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 21; 1 Kings xii. 6.

*Take the filthy garments from off him*] The same Heb. verb as in Isa. vi. 7, “thine iniquity is *taken away*.”

*I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee*] The same Heb. verb as in xiii. 2, “I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.”

5. *And I said*] (So the Targum.) The Prophet is the speaker, and he speaks not as one beholding a vision, but as a Jew zealous for the Jewish priesthood. The meaning of the filthy garments is painfully clear, and Zechariah is stirred up to make intercession. A defiled priesthood is an unbearable thought to him, and in his impatience he bursts out into a request that he may see the final sign of priestly purity granted, namely, the mitre inscribed with the words HOLY TO JEHOVAH.

The Vulgate and one Heb. MS cited by Kennicott read, “And he (i.e. the Angel of the LORD) said.” The LXX reads “And set ye” (*καὶ ἐπιθετε*) only. Plainly the interposition of the Prophet in the first person was felt by the Greek and Latin translators to be a difficulty, but it has a parallel in Amos vii. 2, 5.

*a fair mitre*] Vulg. *cidarim mundam*. “Fair” is ambiguous in A.V.; usually it represents a Heb. word meaning “beautiful,” but here the Heb. word is different and means “clean.” Cp. the phrase in the rubric prefixed to the Communion Office, “a fair white linen cloth” (so in all editions of the P.B. from 1552).

*mitre*] The high priest’s mitre had upon it a plate of gold

and clothed him with garments; and the angel of the  
 6 LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD protested  
 7 unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: If  
 thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my  
 charge, then thou also shalt judge my house, and shalt  
 also keep my courts, and I will give thee <sup>1</sup>a place of  
 8 access among these that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua  
 the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before  
 thee; for they are men which are a <sup>2</sup>sign: for, behold,  
 9 I will bring forth my servant the <sup>3</sup>Branch. For behold,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *places to walk*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *wonder*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *Shoot* Or, *Sprout*

bearing the inscription "HOLY TO JEHOVAH" (*Sanctum Domino*, Vulg.): Exod. xxviii. 36—38.

6. *protested*] The Heb. word is sometimes (e.g. Deut. viii. 19) translated "testify." It means "to affirm" with a warning implied.

7. *if thou wilt keep my charge*] The special charge not defined, but understood, of faithfulness to the house of David represented now by the man called, "the Shoot."

*thou also shalt judge my house*] Thou shalt share with the "Shoot" the duty of government. "The priest" had judicial functions; Deut. xvii. 8—13.

*and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee*] LXX following a different reading gives, "and if thou shalt keep my courts, then I will give thee." "To keep JEHOVAH's courts" is "to be faithful in the care of JEHOVAH's house, and in the due maintenance of its service"; contrast Mal. i. 6—14.

*a place of access*] A metaphor drawn from free access to the Temple, to signify ready access to JEHOVAH himself. Access to the sanctuary was of course open only to such priests as were in a state of ritual purity; Exod. xl. 30—32.

8. *they are men which are a sign*] These persons who have just been described as "thy fellows which sit before thee" are those referred to in vi. 10, 14. They were exiles returned from Babylon, whom the Prophet looks upon as the advance guard of a great host of returning Israelites, and as the sign of a coming restoration of the Jewish state. Probably with the high priest they made up the number *seven*; cp. iv. 10, note.

*I will bring forth*] Rather, **I am bringing in**; LXX ἀγω. It is an announcement for the near future.

*my servant the Branch*] Better as marg. **the Shoot** (or *Sprout*), Heb. *ṣemaḥ*. The same title or designation is found in vi. 12, "Behold a man whose name is the Shoot," and also in Jer. xxiii.

the stone that I have set before Joshua; upon one stone are seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the

5. "Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Shoot"; xxxiii. 15, "In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Shoot of righteousness to grow up unto David"; cp. Isa. iv. 2.

The Heb. word is ambiguous to this extent that a "Shoot" may stand either for an individual or for a family. In the present case the parallel passage (vi. 12), shows that the Prophet had an individual in mind, and this individual, we conclude from iv. 6—10 was Zerubbabel, the Jewish governor of Judah. He is called the "Shoot" because the word suggests *life* and *promise of growth*. The old tree of the Jewish State was dead, but the prophet foreshadows a new life through the springing up of a new Shoot of David's house.

As a rendering of *semah* the Greek translators gave *ἀνατολή* meaning no doubt by it a "Shoot," though the word answers perhaps more frequently to "Dawn" or "Place of Dawn" (i.e. the east). Accordingly in the Song of Zacharias (Luke i. 78) the coming of the Messianic age is described in the words, "The *dayspring* (*ἀνατολή*) from on high shall visit us."

9. *behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; upon one stone are seven eyes*] The assurance of v. 8 is confirmed in v. 9 by a symbolic action. A building stone (no doubt the *headstone* destined to complete the building; cp. iv. 7) is placed before the high priest. It is then pointed out that upon this one stone there are seven eyes engraved. Probably this engraving was due to the superstition of the builders, since the figure of an eye is supposed to avert the danger of the evil eye. A stone marked with seven eyes was found at Gezer, and is figured in *P.E.F. Quarterly Statement*, 1908, page 201. This stone measures 3 ft. 7 in. × 1 ft. 10 in. × 1 ft. 9 in. But the Prophet draws a lesson from this work of masons on their stone. The seven eyes represent, he says, JEHOVAH's favour, for the eye is a sign of watchful care: Ps. xxxiii. 18; xxxiv. 15. JEHOVAH will watch over the completion of the Temple; He will even carve this headstone Himself. This headstone which is to be laid by Zerubbabel (iv. 7) represents in figure Zerubbabel himself, whom Joshua is called upon to acknowledge as the head of Judah. Cp. x. 4, "From him (Judah) shall come forth the corner stone."

9b, 10. (Continuation of ch. v. 11.) THE PUNISHMENT OF THE ENEMY AND THE PROSPERITY OF JUDAH.

*I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day*] I will search out (lit. "feel") the iniquity of that land in one



- 10 iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.] *11. 1. 8*  
 4 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.  
 2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have seen, and behold, a candlestick all of gold, with

**day.** "That land" is the land of Judah's chief foe, called in v. 11, "the land of Shinar"; the reference is to the Chaldeans the authors of the Captivity. The signification of the Heb. verb is, "to feel" or "handle"; cp. Gen. xxvii. 21, "Come near that I may *feel* thee"; also Gen. xxxi. 37. The language of Zechariah is purposely vague, probably because it was not safe to "talk politics" in the days of the terrible Darius, but the Jews would understand the promise, "I will *feel* the iniquity of *that land*" to mean, "I will punish the iniquity of Babylon." Further the phrase "in one day" means that the punishment will be sudden and complete. It is probable that these words (together with v. 10) originally stood after ch. v. 11, but there their meaning was too plain.

10. *shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine*] i.e. each man shall invite his neighbour to sit with him under his vine. No longer shall it be a call to the people to meet "in the gate" to take counsel against some pressing danger.

#### CH. IV. THE FIFTH (Fourth) VISION.

The fifth vision is to be studied in connexion with the fourth, which it probably preceded in time. It is concerned with the two leaders of the Jewish people. Both have the glory of standing by the Lord of the whole earth (v. 14), but it is Zerubbabel who is to be (like Solomon) the Temple-builder. He has begun the work, and he (so runs the word of JEHOVAH) shall finish it. The two visions together teach that honour is for both governor and high priest, but the first place is for Zerubbabel. The Prophet is jealous for the house of David.

#### 1—6 a. THE FIFTH VISION.

1. *and waked me*] Cp. Isa. l. 4, "[JEHOVAH] wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth my ear to hear as they that are taught." The Prophet's *dream* of the seven-branched candlestick becomes a *vision*, when his spiritual senses are awakened by the angel and he receives a revelation of the will of God through the things that he sees.

*that is wakened out of his sleep*] Dan. x. 9—11.

2. *a candlestick...and its seven lamps*] The candlestick



its bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps thereon; <sup>1</sup>there are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one <sup>3</sup> upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. And I answered and spake to the <sup>4</sup> angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered <sup>5</sup> and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake <sup>6</sup> unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto

<sup>1</sup> The Sept. and Vulgate have, *and seven pipes to the lamps*.

(properly "lampstand") of seven lamps is described in Exod. xxxvii. 17—24 as part of the furniture of the Tabernacle; cp. Josephus, *Archaeol.* III. vi. 7 (§§ 144—6). Such a candlestick was carried off from the Temple by the Romans in 70 A.D., as the reliefs on the Arch of Titus at Rome bear witness.

*with its bowl*] Or, as otherwise read, "with a bowl."

*there are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which etc.*] Read perhaps, **There are seven spouts and seven again to the bowl which is upon the top thereof.** A difficult passage. The description *seven pipes to each lamp* (M.T.) is felt to be difficult; LXX (ἐπὶ τὰ ἐπαυροῖδες) and Vulg. (*septem infusoria*) possibly read in the Hebrew "seven pipes" and not "seven pipes and seven." But the latter reading is seen to suit the context excellently as soon as it is recognised that the bowl is feeding the two olive trees, for then *seven and seven* is to be taken as saying that each olive tree receives from JEHOVAH a sevenfold supply of oil. If the text has to be corrected it is at least reasonable to propose to read "to the bowl" for *to the lamps*, for in the earlier part of the verse it is the *bowl* (and not the *lamps*) which is upon *the top of the candlestick*.

4. *And I answered*] For this use of the word "answer," see iii. 4, note.

5. *And I said, No, my lord*] The Prophet has already described the objects, but he does not know their meaning.

6 a. *Then (And) he answered and spake unto me, saying*] The rest of v. 6 with the following passage vv. 7—10 a can hardly be the answer given to the question of v. 4. It is better to find the continuation in v. 10 b, "These seven (i.e. these seven lamps) are the eyes of JEHOVAH; they run through the whole earth." A moment's consideration shows further how well v. 11 follows on. The student should read to the end of v. 14 and then resume at 6 b, "This is the word of the LORD" etc.

Zerubbabel, saying, <sup>1</sup>Not by <sup>1</sup>might, nor by power,  
 7 but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who art  
 thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt*  
*become* a plain: and he shall bring forth the head  
 8 stone with shoutings of Grace, grace, unto it. More-  
 9 over the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, The  
 hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this

<sup>1</sup> Or, *an army*

6 b—10 a. SUCCESS PROMISED TO ZERUBBABEL.

6 b. *This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel*] Not the Prophet's word, but JEHOVAH's word revealed by the angel speaking within the Prophet.

*Not by might*] Marg. *Not by an army*: Vulg. *non in exercitu*. The words are a caution to Zerubbabel not to attempt to restore the kingdom to Judah with the help of the sword. At the time at which Zechariah prophesied the earth was "at rest" (i. 11), but it is quite probable that the Prophet knew of secret movements towards rebellion in which Judah might be involved. His position, if so, was like that of Isaiah two centuries earlier. He wished Judah to remain politically quiet and not to enter into embarrassing engagements with other small states against the Persian power. The early years of Darius were in fact disturbed by revolt following revolt. The time of quietude alluded to in i. 11 was probably short.

*but by my spirit*] The contrast between material power and the power of the spirit of God is found in other passages of the O.T., e.g. Isa. xxxi. 3. To the spirit of God is ascribed life-giving power in Gen. i. 2 and power of destruction in Isa. xl. 7.

7. *O great mountain*] The term "mountain" is used in O.T. in a metaphorical sense to designate any great difficulty to be surmounted; cp. Isa. xl. 4. In the present passage the "great mountain" represents the difficulty raised by the opponents of Zerubbabel who had already shown their power by stopping the rebuilding of the Temple in the days of Cyrus (Ezra iv. 1—5).

*Grace, grace unto it*] A cry of admiration: "How beautiful it is!" *Grace* (Heb. *hên*) is "outward grace," i.e. "beauty"; cp. Prov. xxxi. 30, "Favour (*hên*, "grace") is deceitful and beauty is vain."

9. *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house*] Rather, **The hands of Z. have founded** (i.e. "begun") **this house**.

The foundations of Solomon's temple were made and laid with the help of Tyrian workmen and were no doubt of great strength (1 Kings v. 17, 18). When some 400 years later the Chaldeans

house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for <sup>10</sup> they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, <sup>11</sup> even these seven, *which are the eyes of the LORD*; they run to and fro through the whole earth. Then answered I, and said unto him, What are <sup>11</sup> these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered the <sup>12</sup> second time, and said unto him, What be these two olive

“burnt the house of the LORD” (2 Kings xxv. 9), the foundations no doubt remained uninjured, and they would inevitably be used in the building of the new house. So, in the strict sense of the term there was no “laying of a foundation” by Zerubbabel. The Heb. verb “found” is used in the looser sense of “beginning” or building upon the foundation: Ezra iii. 8—13; Hag. ii. 18 (see note).

*thou shalt know*] The Prophet turns to address Zerubbabel: cp. ver. 6. At the end of the verse LXX has *πρὸς σέ (unto thee)* for Heb. *unto you*, but the Heb. reading is to be preferred, for the Prophet’s mission is to the whole people.

*the LORD of hosts hath sent me*] Cp. ii. 8; Isa. xlvi. 16.

**10 a.** *For who hath despised...Zerubbabel*] **For they, whoever they were, who despised the day of small things shall rejoice etc.,** i.e. shall have occasion to rejoice, because of the final success of Zerubbabel’s work. Those who once despaired shall soon have cause to rejoice.

#### 10 b—14. THE FIFTH VISION (continuation).

**10 b.** *even these seven which are the eyes of the LORD*] Rather (against the Heb. accents), **These seven are the eyes of the LORD.** Ver. 10 b is to be read as the continuation of 6 a; it gives the answer to the question asked in ver. 4, “What are these, my lord?” The “seven lamps” of ver. 2 are said by the Angel to be the seven eyes of **JEHOVAH**.

**11.** *What are these etc.*] The Prophet’s question is not answered, for it is of relative unimportance; the two olive trees represent no doubt the Jewish people. Two olive trees are shown (instead of one) because the candlestick, the symbol of **JEHOVAH**, has to stand *in the midst* of his people (ii. 11).

**12.** *these two olive branches*] Rather, **the two branches (spikes) of the olives.** The Prophet now asks a question of immediate significance, for the two branches are no other than Zerubbabel and Joshua.

branches, <sup>1</sup> which are beside the two golden spouts, that  
 13 empty <sup>2</sup> the golden oil out of themselves? And he  
 answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be?  
 14 And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the  
 two sons of oil, that stand by the Lord of the whole  
 earth. *I follows*  
 5 Then again I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold,  
 2 a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou?  
 And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof

<sup>1</sup> Or, *which by means of the two golden spouts empty*

<sup>2</sup> Heb. *the gold*.

*which are beside...out of themselves*] The Hebrew text is difficult to translate and may be corrupt. But the main sense is clear. The olive branches *receive* oil from the candlestick of the seven lamps; they do not supply the candlestick. Just as the LORD gives oil to the olive tree, so does He give His spirit to the leaders of Judah.

14. *the two sons of oil*] The two branches of the olive trees. The metaphor of "standing by the Lord of the whole earth" may have been suggested by the practice of the Persian court. Seven Persian princes are described as "seeing the king's face" (Esther i. 14). Zerubbabel and Joshua are described as favoured members of the court of Heaven; cp. iii. 7, where "a place of access among these that stand by" is promised to Joshua.

#### CH. V. 1—4. THE SIXTH VISION.

The sixth vision teaches that a cleansing judgement must overtake the sinners within the Jewish community. Even in the preceding visions which for the most part carry encouragement the note of warning is heard. Zechariah is no mere diviner or soothsayer; he is a true prophet charged with the task not only of administering comfort, but also of rebuking vice (i. 3—6). It may be gathered from vii. 9, 10 that even within the Jewish community much oppression was rife; by means of "false swearing" the rich "stole" from the poor after the manner of Ahab (1 Kings xxi.).

1. *a flying roll*] Rather, **a roll, flying**. No roll except a dream roll "flies." LXX (*δρέπανον πετόμενον*, "a sickle flying") confuses Heb. *mēgillah*, "roll" with *maggāl*, "sickle."

2. *the length thereof* etc.] The roll is of large size: thirty feet by fifteen. It answers to the huge stone tablets inscribed with the laws of the country which were set up in ancient states, e.g. in Babylonia by Hammurabi, and in central Palestine by Joshua (Josh. viii. 30—35). The Hebrew laws were given in

is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth <sup>3</sup> over the face of the whole land: for every one that stealeth shall be purged out <sup>1</sup> on the one side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be purged out <sup>1</sup> on the other side according to it. I will cause it to go <sup>4</sup> forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall abide in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *from hence*

the form of a covenant between JEHOVAH and Israel with a curse attached as a penalty for breaking them. This curse is represented here as a roll (inscribed with the terms of the covenant) moving swiftly through the air and bearing punishment for the house of the offender.

3. *that stealeth...that sweareth*] No doubt any breach of the commandments is to be punished, but these two offences are specially mentioned because they were at this time specially prevalent; see vii. 9, 10; viii. 17.

*shall be purged out*] Rather, **hath been purged out**, i.e. by the sentence written in the roll. The Prophet's predictions and assurances belong to the *near* future or even to the present; cp. iii. 8.

4. *I will cause it to go forth*] Better, **I have caused it to go forth**. The curse is already in action.

*it shall abide*] Better, **it shall pass the night**. The Hebrews thought of the night as the natural time for the coming of calamity; cp. Ps. xxx. 5, literally, "In the evening weeping will take up its lodging for the night."

*the timber thereof and the stones thereof*] The "thief" and "false swearer" of whom Zechariah speaks is one who has grown rich by oppression. He consequently has a rich man's house of "timber" and "stone" (cp. Hag. i. 4), but this house (the vision teaches) will be destroyed, because a curse is on it.

## 5—11. THE SEVENTH VISION.

The seventh vision shows that now that the sins of the sinners have been visited upon the guilty individuals (VISION SIX) the guilt of the community is to be removed and assigned to Judah's great enemy, Babylon. Guilt is removed by action unexpected, irresistible, far-reaching. The largeness of the measure, the helplessness of the woman representing Wickedness, the far journey

5 Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said  
 unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this  
 6 that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said,  
 This is the ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover,  
 7 This is their <sup>1</sup>resemblance in all the land: (and behold,  
 there was lifted up a <sup>2</sup>talent of lead:) and this is a  
 8 woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said,  
 This is Wickedness; and he cast her down into the  
 midst of the ephah: and he cast the weight of lead  
 9 upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes,  
 and saw, and behold, there came forth two women,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *eye*. According to some ancient authorities, *iniquity*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *round piece*

she is compelled to take, the permanent prison assigned her in a distant land—all these traits are intended to show how great is the Divine decision which the Prophet announces. If JEHOVAH be pleased to remove Judah's guilt, it is indeed removed.

5. *went forth*] Cp. ii. 3, note.

6. *the ephah that goeth forth*] The *ephah* was a Hebrew measure of capacity equal to about 9 gallons. Here *ephah* ("measure") is used metaphorically to signify the carefully measured punishment for sin dealt out by Divine justice. It "goes forth" as appointed by JEHOVAH.

*He said moreover, This is their resemblance*] Rather, **And he said, This is their eye** (cp. margin). The words, *This is their resemblance* are only a conjectural translation of the Heb. text, which indeed seems to be corrupt. Possibly the words, *And he said, This is their eye*, are a scribe's faulty repetition of the preceding words, *And he said, This is the ephah*; in the technical language of textual criticism they are a "doublet." Omitting the suspected words we get, *And he said, This is the ephah which goeth forth in (or through) all the land*. The LXX however had the doubtful clause, which they render, καὶ εἶπεν, Αὐτὴ ἡ ἀδικία αὐτῶν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ, "And he said, This is their iniquity in all the land." The two Heb. words (for *eye* and *iniquity*) are easily confused, but the expression *their iniquity* is itself open to suspicion, for it anticipates the explanation given in v. 8.

7. *a talent of lead*] Those who have sinned by fraud are appropriately punished by measure and weight: they are imprisoned in an *ephah* and secured by a *talent* of lead.

8. *Wickedness*] A personification of the guilt of the sinners among the Jewish people.

9. *two women, and the wind was in their wings*] These two



and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the <sup>10</sup> angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build her an house <sup>11</sup> in the land of Shinar: and when it is <sup>1</sup>prepared, she shall be set there <sup>2</sup>in her own place.

And again I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold, <sup>6</sup> there came four chariots out from between <sup>3</sup>two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *established*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *upon her own base*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *the two*

are ministers of justice; cp. Rev. ix. 8, where the avenging "locusts" are said to have "hair like women."

*they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven]* The stork is regarded as a very high flyer; cp. Jer. viii. 7, "the stork in the heaven." The action is easily performed by the Divine ministers; no resistance on the part of the imprisoned woman is possible.

<sup>11.</sup> *the land of Shinar]* i.e. Shumir, southern Babylonia. The guilt of Judah is removed from her to the far south-east, where it is transferred in permanence to her oppressor.

For the continuation of this utterance see iii. 9 b, 10.

#### CH. VI. 1—8. THE EIGHTH VISION.

The first vision and the eighth form together the framework in which the whole section (i. 7—vi. 8) is set. The one appropriately begins, the other appropriately closes the series of visions. Neither is a *theophany*—a revelation of God—but each stands instead of a theophany. Probably Zechariah shrank (as Isaiah did *not*; Isa. vi. 1 ff.) from describing a vision of the God of Israel. In the first the Angel of JEHOVAH appears and converses through the veil with JEHOVAH himself. In the last the gate between Heaven and Earth is opened and the "four spirits of heaven" in the guise of chariots come forth.

<sup>1.</sup> *from between two mountains]* Render (as marg.), **from between the two mountains**. According to a mythological conception which is represented on Babylonian seals the sun rises between two mountains or mountain ranges in the east.

*the mountains were mountains of brass]* Render, **the mountains were the mountains of brass** ("bronze," LXX χαλκᾶ). An early tradition referred to in the Koran (chap. xviii. *fin.*) tells of a brazen (or "copper") rampart closing the passage between two mountains and preventing the incursion of "Gog and



the first chariot were red horses; and in the second  
 3 chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white  
 horses; and in the fourth chariot grised <sup>1</sup>bay horses.  
 4 Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked  
 5 with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel  
 answered and said unto me, These are the four <sup>2</sup>winds  
 of heaven, which go forth from <sup>3</sup>standing before the  
 6 Lord of all the earth. *The chariot* wherein are the black

<sup>1</sup> Or, *strong* The word is omitted in the Syriac.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *spirits* <sup>3</sup> Or, *presenting themselves*

Magog." Probably Zechariah is here making use of some tradition current in Babylonia according to which a range of "brazen" (bronze) mountains formed the boundary between earth and the dwellings of the gods.

2. *In the first chariot were red horses*] The Heb. word used here for red is *ādummīm* (singular *ādōm*); it is from the same root as the Heb. words *ādām*, "man," and *ādāmāh*, "ground." The colour meant is a natural red which in its different shades might be used of the skin of a man, the surface of the ground, or the coat of a horse. In v. 7 the same horses (so it seems) are described as *āmūççīm*, "bay" (R.V.); better "strong" (without reference to colour).

3. *grised bay*] *Grised* means "gray," French "gris," and *bay* "reddish brown"; the two adjectives together might denote a *gray shot with red*. But the corresponding Heb. words are not so easily explained. The first (*hēruddīm*) probably means "spotted"; the second (*āmūççīm*) is translated "bay" in R.V. text, "strong" in R.V. marg. Both words are quite rare in the O.T. and probably one is a gloss upon the other.

5. *the four winds*] Marg. "the four spirits." The difference is not great viewed from the Heb. standpoint: winds are angels (Ps. civ. 4).

*standing before the Lord*] Cp. marg. and Job i. 6; ii. 1.

6. *The chariot wherein are the black horses goeth forth toward the north country*] Read simply, **The black horses are about to go forth against the north country.** The first two words of the Heb. text are due to the redundant style of Zechariah; cp. viii. 17, 20. The interpreting angel tells the Prophet that the spirits of heaven represented by the black horses, are about to execute a mission of chastisement in the north country. JEHOVAH himself will take vengeance on the nations which have oppressed Judah; cp. iv. 6, "not by an army, nor by power, but by my spirit." The translation of R.V. presupposes an impossibly awkward construction in the Hebrew.

Zechariah is not consistent in his use of imagery; he does not

horses goeth forth toward the north country; and the white went forth after them; and the grisled went forth toward the south country. And the <sup>1</sup>bay went forth, 7 and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, 8 saying, Behold, they that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *strong* The Syriac and Aquila have, *red*.

mention the chariots after *v.* 3, and he does not describe the colours of the horses with consistency. In *v.* 7 he drops the reference to colour altogether; see marg.

*the white went forth after them*] Rather, **the white went forth to** the land which was **behind them**, i.e. westward. An Eastern in reckoning the points of the compass faces the rising sun; consequently behind him is the west. The black horses (presaging evil) turned towards the land of Judah's captivity; the white (presaging good) turned westward, i.e. towards Judah's own land.

7. *the bay*] Better as margin, **the strong**; and cp. *v.* 3, note. The strong horses are those which are assigned the task of patrolling; their function is to keep Judah safe.

*and sought to go*] i.e. they made a petition that they might be allowed to go; the Heb. verb is the same as in Neh. ii. 4. The Prophet does not give an absolute promise; the heavenly powers (he teaches) are ready to protect Judah, but the realization of the protection depends on some unmentioned factor, probably on the worthiness of the Jewish people.

8. *Then cried he upon me*] Rather, **Then he caused me to cry aloud**, as one having an announcement to make.

*and spake unto me, saying*] The words which follow give the substance of the message which the Prophet is bidden to deliver.

*toward the north country...in the north country*] Rather, **against the north country...concerning the north country**.

*have quieted my spirit*] JEHOVAH's spirit was unquiet as long as the nations which had afflicted Judah and Jerusalem were left unpunished. The meaning of the vision is summed up under three heads. The Prophet is shown the general Divine providence over the earth; guardian spirits are appointed for Judah; and avenging spirits go to execute punishment upon Babylon.

9—15. THE GIFTS BROUGHT FROM BABYLON USED BY  
ZECHARIAH FOR A SIGN.

No immediate connexion is to be traced between these verses and those which immediately precede them (*vv.* 1—8, the Vision of the Four Chariots). Their context is to be found rather in *iv.* 6 *b*—10 *a*, and they are connected closely with *iv.* 9, where the promise is given to Zerubbabel that he (and no other) shall finish the Temple.

To understand the passage it is necessary to grasp the circumstances of the Jewish people in Judaea and also the relations in which the two heads of the people stood to each other. As to the people themselves they were sharply divided into two sections; those who had had experience of captivity, and those who had not. The latter, the remnant left in Judaea by the Chaldeans, being deprived of their best leaders, were very weak in religious and national feeling; they had begun in fact to be absorbed by their heathen neighbours. In Babylonia, on the contrary, exile from Jerusalem tended to increase the devotion of the exiles to their city. So it was that many responded to the edict by which Cyrus invited them to rebuild the Temple; they proved their zeal for their religion and country by breaking up their homes in Babylonia and returning to a half-ruined province which was little ready to receive them. In Judaea these men and their descendants were known as *Bēnē-golah*, "Children of Captivity," or (more briefly) as the *Golah*, "Captivity." It was an honourable title, and the families which bore it formed a kind of aristocracy among their countrymen. Proud of their distinction they claimed for themselves the sole right of building the Temple (*Ezra* *iv.* 1—3), and they warned off from the work the "people of the land," the mixed population, the offspring of marriages between the Jews and their heathen neighbours. By this action, whether right or wrong in itself, the *Golah* took upon their shoulders a task too great for their unaided strength. The work of Temple-building proceeded slowly, and no doubt discouragement ensued.

And now an incident happened which the Prophet at the bidding of *JEHOVAH* turned to the encouragement of the builders. A Jewish family ("the household of Josiah the son of Zephaniah") arrived from Babylon as pilgrims to their native city bringing with them silver and gold as gifts. They came as pilgrims only to visit Jerusalem, and not as settlers to take up again their ancestral lands<sup>1</sup>. But their remembrance of the Temple was significant, and Zechariah interpreted it as the earnest of greater things. So on the very day of the arrival of the pilgrims (*v.* 10) the Prophet took with him to welcome them certain of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *v.* 10, "they are *come*" (not "returned")."

the *leaders* (so LXX, τῶν ἀρχόντων) of the *Golah*, men of the families of Tobijah and of Jedaiah.

In the presence of these important witnesses he formally received the offering of silver and gold which the pilgrims had brought. Then he announced that these gifts brought from afar foreshadowed the coming of another *Golah*, a fresh return from Babylon: "they that are far off shall come and shall build in the temple of the LORD" (v. 15).

But there is more in this passage; the ceremonial "crowning" of the high priest has to be considered. To understand this incident it is necessary to grasp the relations in which the two heads of the Jewish people stood to one another. There are pretty clear signs of conflicting claims and of a reconciliation attempted by Zechariah. Zerubbabel and Joshua are indeed described as working in co-operation in the book of Ezra (iii. 2, 8; iv. 2, 3) as well as in Haggai and Zechariah. No statement is made anywhere that their co-operation was other than hearty and complete, and yet some passages of Zechariah are easier to interpret, if we assume that the Prophet had detected a "rift within the lute," and that he laboured to prevent the breach from growing. In iii. 8 after special favour has been shown in vision to Joshua he is urged to welcome another than himself as the special Servant of JEHOVAH, the Shoot. In iv. 9 the promise of the successful rebuilding of the Temple is made to Zerubbabel, and at the same time lest Joshua should feel himself slighted the vision of the candlestick shows that JEHOVAH has not one, but *two* highly favoured ones, two "sons of oil," who are his instruments of blessing to Judah.

In the present passage again Zechariah teaches that Zerubbabel the prince is to rebuild the Temple which Solomon the king originally erected: Zerubbabel was to be the unquestioned head of the Jewish people. But Joshua the priest was to receive his share of honour. So Zechariah takes the opportunity of the presentation of the gifts of the household of Zephaniah to pay homage to Joshua. He puts upon his head a crown or chaplet of honour. At the same time he reminds him that he is priest only, and not prince. His duty is to stand by the throne of another and to assist the man of the LORD's choice, whose title is the Shoot. Only a scion of the house of David (Zerubbabel) can be head of the nation.

The text of this passage is marked by two or three uncertainties. There is in particular a lack of correspondence between the proper names (as they appear in A.V. and R.V.) of v. 10 and those of v. 14.

## v. 10

## v. 14

of *Heldai*, of Tobijah, and of  
Jedaiah...  
the household of *Josiah* the  
son of Zephaniah

to *Helem*, and to Tobijah and  
to Jedaiah...  
to *Hen* the son of Zephaniah

9 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,  
 10 Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah,  
 and of Jedaiah; and come thou the same day, and go  
 into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, whither  
 11 they are come from Babylon; yea, take of *them* silver  
 and gold, and make <sup>1</sup>crowns, and set them upon the  
 head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *a crown, and set it*

The double difference between vv. 10 and 14 is however supported by the LXX, so that our present text (or at any rate the apparent difficulty in it) goes back to the second century B.C. A suitable rendering however of v. 14 is to be found, if *Helem* and *Hen* be taken as common nouns, and if the copula be omitted before the words, *to Tobijah*; see below.

10. *them who were of the captivity*] The Heb. word *gōlah*, "captivity," is used also in the concrete sense of a "body of exiles"; see Ezek. i. 1; iii. 11, 15, *al.* In the present passage it means a body of former exiles who had returned to their country; so also in Ezra x. 8. Thus *gōlah* is (1) "captivity"; (2) "captives"; (3) "returned captives."

*Heldai*] Many Jewish names of the post-exilic period have the termination *-ai*; cp. Ezra x. 28; 33; 37. The Peshitta gives *Huldai* (cp. *Huldah*, the name of a prophetess, 2 Kings xxii. 14); both these names probably mean "mole." The LXX however take the word as a common noun in the sense of "rulers" (τῶν ἀρχόντων), and in v. 14 (M.T.) the name *Heldai* does not appear. Translate therefore (following LXX in part), **Take men of the *golah* even of their leaders, of the families of Tobijah and Jedaiah, and enter in the same day and go in unto the household of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, which have come from Babylon.**

*house*] Rather, **household.**

11. *crowns*] Heb. *‘atārōth*; "wreaths" or "crowns." LXX στεφάνους here, but sing. in v. 14. These crowns are to be considered in the first place as tribute paid by Jews in exile to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, although this House was still in building and probably *not* at an advanced stage. The Jews used to pay their tribute to the Seleucid kings in the form of crowns (1 Macc. x. 29; xi. 35; xiii. 37, 39). With the addition of a crown (or "crowns") the clothing of the high priest with his distinctive dress (begun in iii. 4, 5) is completed according to the law of Exod. xxix. 6 (cp. Lev. viii. 9) which runs, "thou shalt set the mitre (*miṣnepheth* = *ḥānīph*) upon his head, and put the holy crown (*nēzer*) upon the mitre." The symbolic action of crowning Joshua is of the nature of a reassurance. Joshua shall hold a place of high honour, yet not he but another is

and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD <sup>12</sup> of hosts, saying, Behold, the man <sup>1</sup>whose name is the <sup>2</sup>Branch; and he shall <sup>3</sup>grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build <sup>13</sup> the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and <sup>4</sup>he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the <sup>5</sup>crowns shall <sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *whose name is the Bud; and it (or they) shall bud forth under him*    <sup>2</sup> Or, *Shoot*    Or, *Sprout*    <sup>3</sup> Or, *shoot*    <sup>4</sup> Or, *there shall be*    <sup>5</sup> Or, *crown*

JEHOVAH'S servant charged with the duty and the honour of rebuilding the Temple.

12. *Behold, the man*] Rather, **Behold, a man**. The person intended is announced to be near at hand, but nothing is said in the present passage to identify him. His name has already been told (iv. 6—10). The Prophet's object in the present passage is simply to impress upon Joshua his duty of taking the lower place in the commonwealth. The other shall be chief ruler, and Joshua is to be priest beside his throne.

*the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place*] Translate, keeping the Heb. play upon the words, **the Shoot, and he shall shoot forth in his place**.

*the temple*] Heb. *hēychāl*. The same word as in Hag. ii. 15, where see note.

13. *and he shall be a priest upon his throne*] Rather, **and there shall be a priest beside his throne** (cp. margin). This priest is of course Joshua, who is to be the chief counsellor of Zerubbabel.

*the counsel of peace shall be between them both*] (The word *both* is not needed.) The differences between prince and priest shall be reconciled by peaceful means.

14. *And the crowns shall be etc.*] The best attested reading has "crown" in the singular (Pesh., LXX; the Heb. unpointed text should be so read). As the "crowns" whether two (or more) were both (or all) fixed on to the mitre they might be indifferently regarded as one crown or several. In v. 11 the Targum, taking the crowns to be in meaning *one*, renders "a great crown"—triple perhaps like the Pope's. Translate, **And the crown shall be for health (recovery) to Tobijah and Jedaiah and for favour (beauty) to the son of Zephaniah**. The offering will strengthen the hands of the Temple-builders, and will also be a glory to those who brought it. It "blesses him that gives and him who takes." The copula before *to Tobijah* should be omitted.



be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and  
 1 to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the  
 15 temple of the LORD. And they that are far off shall  
 come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall  
 know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.  
 And *this* shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey  
 the voice of the LORD your God.

7 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius,  
 that the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in  
 the fourth *day* of the ninth month, even in Chislev.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *for the kindness of the son &c.*

*Helem*] A common noun found here only, meaning "recovery of health, renewal of strength." The cognate verb occurs Job xxxix. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 16.

*Hen*] A word meaning "favour." LXX χάριτα.

*in the temple of the LORD*] The crowns are to be kept for the far future as a sign of the fulfilment of the word of the LORD.

15. *they that are far off shall come*] The Jews in Judah formed a small, poor, and depressed community needing badly the encouragement which could be given by the arrival of co-religionists from afar supplied with means and zealous for the welfare of Jerusalem. Zechariah points to the arrival of the household of Josiah the son of Zephaniah as foreshadowing such re-inforcements: v. 10; i. 17; 21; ii. 7; cp. Hag. ii. 7, note.

*ye shall know*] Cp. iv. 9.

*And this shall come to pass...your God.*] Rather, **And it shall come to pass...your God....** The words form an *Aposiopesis*, either intentional, or due to some very early injury to the text. This figure of speech, though rare, is not unknown in the O.T. e.g. Exod. xxxii. 32; 2 Sam. xxiii. 17; Ps. xxvii. 13. The clause to be supplied may be of quite a general character, e.g., "then I will give you such and such things" (cp. 2 Sam. xii. 8); or again, "then I will give you peace."

CH. VII. 1—7. THE WORD OF JEHOVAH. MERCY AND JUDGEMENT ARE PREFERRED BY HIM ABOVE FASTING.

1. *in the fourth year*] The last date given in this book is the second year, eleventh month, twenty-fourth day (ch. i. 7). The Temple was not finished until the "sixth year" of Darius Hystaspis (Ezra vi. 15).

*Chislev*] Neh. i. 1; 1 Macc. i. 54. The Assyrio-Babylonian name of the ninth month (*Kislimu*); cp. i. 7 (*Shebat*, the eleventh month). See *Camb. Companion*, pp. 409 f.



<sup>1</sup>Now *they* of Beth-el had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to intreat the favour of the LORD, *and* to speak unto the priests of the house of the LORD 3 of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years? Then came the word of the LORD 4 of hosts unto me, saying, Speak unto all the people of 5 the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Now they of Beth-el, even Sharezer...had sent*

2. *Now they of Beth-el etc.*] Cp. Ezra ii. 28; Neh. xi. 31.

*Sharezer*] Or, acc. to another reading, "Sarezer." A Babylonian name in a shortened form (cp. "Nergal-Sharezer," Jer. xxxix. 3). This person was no doubt a Jew, and his Hebrew name follows; see next note.

*and Regem-melech*] The conjunction should probably be omitted, for *Regem-melech* (which perhaps means King's Friend or Counsellor) is most probably Sharezer's second name. With this agrees the following word in the Hebrew which must be rendered "*and his men.*"

*and their men*] A mistranslation; render, **and his men.**

*to intreat the favour of the LORD*] Probably there was some special reason for this step, e.g. a threat of famine (due to drought or locusts perhaps). They wished to propitiate JEHOVAH lest he should plague them, and so they were willing to submit to a rigorous fast.

3. *Should I weep*] It is Sharezer who asks the question. "Weeping" stands for all the practices which made up a day of fasting and humiliation; cp. Mal. ii. 13. A fuller enumeration of these practices is given in Joel ii. 12, 13, "Turn ye unto me ...with *fasting*, and with *weeping*, and with mourning (*wailing*): and *rend* your hearts, and not *your garments.*" Additional practices were to put on sackcloth and to scatter earth (dust) upon the body (head); Josh. vii. 6; Neh. ix. 1.

*in the fifth month*] This was the month of the destruction of Solomon's temple and the general ruin of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxv. 8 ff.). Now that the Temple was making progress towards rebuilding, it was natural to ask whether the fast kept in memory of its destruction should still be observed.

*separating*] The same Heb. verb is used Lev. xxii. 2; Ezek. xiv. 7; Hos. ix. 10. The notion is of a consecration gained by abstaining from usual ways of life.

5. *Speak unto all the people of the land*] Sharezer did not ask his question of Zechariah, nor did JEHOVAH instruct the Prophet to address his (virtual) reply to the Babylonian (Samaritan) officer. The question of Sharezer (of which Zechariah got

and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh *month*, even these seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me,

knowledge) was simply the occasion for a Divine lesson on fasting, of which the Prophet took advantage.

*in the seventh month*] No fewer than four "fasting" months (i.e. the tenth, fourth, fifth, and seventh, *Tishri*) are mentioned in viii. 19, all of which are supposed to owe their origin to the events of the great Chaldean tragedy of 586 B.C. In the tenth month Nebuchadrezzar invested Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 1); in the fourth month (of the next year but one) the Chaldeans broke into the city (2 Kings xxv. 3 = Jer. xxxix. 2); in the fifth month Nebuzaradan burnt the Temple (2 Kings xxv. 8); in the seventh month Gedaliah, the Jewish governor appointed by the Chaldeans, was assassinated, and the Jewish remnant took to flight (Jer. xli. 1 ff.). In Talmudical times the third day of the seventh month was observed as the Fast of Gedaliah (Talmud Bab., *Rosh ha-Shanah*, 18 b; cp. *Megillath Ta'anith*, conclusion).

It is not possible to decide what particular fast is referred to by Zechariah as "the fast of the seventh month." In Neh. ix. 1 it is said that a general fast was held on the twenty-fourth of the seventh month at which the people made a general confession of sins in sackcloth and ashes ("earth"). If it were clear that the fast there described was a yearly institution (and not an isolated incident) it might well be the fast referred to by Zechariah, but unfortunately the point is not made clear in the narrative. If this identification be rejected, the choice lies between the Fast of Gedaliah and the well-known Day of Atonement which was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev. xvi. 29). Against the Day of Atonement it is urged that there is no evidence that it existed as early as the time of Zechariah; in fact Nehemiah's fast on the twenty-fourth seems to leave no room for so important a fast on the tenth. An equally strong argument of a similar kind can be advanced against the Fast of Gedaliah, the evidence for which is far later than that for the Day of Atonement. Probably the seventh month was distinguished from very early times by a great fast, but the day of the month may have varied. Since the First of Tishri was sometimes reckoned as the Beginning of the Year, the month was not unsuitable for a fast for the confession of the sins of the past year.

*even these seventy years*] This note of time does not mean that the two fasts had been in use for just seventy years neither more nor less. Rather it glances at the fact that the Jews complained that their punishment had lasted for seventy years, though during that time they had been faithful to the service of ЈЕХОВАН. Cp. i. 12.

*fast unto me*] i.e. fast in the way I choose; Isa. lviii. 5.

even to me? And when ye eat, and when ye drink, **6**  
<sup>1</sup>do not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?  
*Should ye not hear* the words which the LORD hath **7**  
 cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was  
 inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof  
 round about her, and the South and the lowland were  
 inhabited?

<sup>1</sup> Or, *are not ye they that eat &c.*

**6.** *do not ye eat for yourselves etc.] Is it not ye that eat, and ye that drink?* A Hebrew sacrifice (unless it were a whole burnt offering) implied a feast for the sacrificer and his family. See Deut. xii. 5—7; and cp. Ps. l. 12, 13.

**7.** *Should ye not hear the words]* Cp. i. 4 ff.  
*hath cried]* Cp. i. 4. The Heb. word means to *proclaim* as a crier (Isa. lviii. 1), or sometimes to *read aloud* (Jer. xxxvi. 6, 8, 10).

*in prosperity]* Or, "prosperous." The same adjective is translated "peaceable" in 1 Chron. iv. 40. The main idea of the word is *quiet*.

*the South]* Heb. *Negeb*, i.e. the southern part of Judah which shades off into the desert of Sinai. The list of its cities is given in Josh. xv. 21—32; among them are Ziph, Ziklag, and Beer-sheba.

*the lowland]* Heb. *Shēphēlah*. The Heb. word is translated variously in the A.V. as "the vale, the valley, the low plains, the low country," but for these R.V. substitutes "the lowland," which should perhaps be spelt with a capital L. The *Shēphēlah* is the stretch of low hills running north and south and separating the Maritime Plain (the Philistine country) from the Mountain (the hill country of Judah). See G. A. Smith, *H.G.H.L.*, ch. x.

Its cities are enumerated in Josh. xv. 33—47, and apparently Gaza is reckoned with them, though Gaza belongs rather to the Philistine Plain. The Greek transliteration *σεφηλά* (*Sephela*, A.V.; "the plain country," R.V.) occurs 1 Macc. xii. 38.

*were inhabited]* i.e. by men of Judah. In the days of Zechariah the Philistines were no doubt occupying the *Shēphēlah*; hence probably the denunciation of the Philistine cities in ix. 5—7. The *Negeb* on the other hand would fall into the hands of the Edomites.

#### 8—14. INJUSTICE THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DESOLATION OF THE LAND.

The teaching of this section is characteristic of Zechariah; cp. i. 3—6. The Prophet never forgets the awful chastisement inflicted on his people for their past sins of oppression, and by

8 And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah,  
 9 saying, Thus hath the LORD of hosts spoken, saying,  
 Execute true judgement, and shew mercy and com-  
 10 passion every man to his brother: and oppress not the  
 widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor;  
 and let none of you imagine evil against his brother  
 11 in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and <sup>1</sup>pulled  
 away the shoulder, and <sup>2</sup>stopped their ears, that they  
 12 should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an

<sup>1</sup> Or, *turned a stubborn shoulder*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *made their ears heavy* See Is. vi. 10.

reminding them of it he warns them against persisting in similar sins in the present. The Jewish nobles were themselves in a depressed condition, and yet they in turn became oppressors of their weaker brethren. So Zechariah tells once more the story, Why the land of Judah was laid desolate.

8. *And the word etc.*] The verse is emphatic (cp. v. 1); the LORD delivers again by Zechariah the message which he had sent before the Captivity by his prophets of old.

9. *Thus hath the LORD of hosts spoken*] **Thus did the LORD of hosts speak**, i.e. by the former prophets.

*Execute true judgement*] Cp. Isa. i. 17; Jer. xxii. 3, 4.

*mercy and compassion*] "Mercy" (Heb. *hesed*) means "kindness" in outward act. Cp. Gen. xl. 14; 2 Sam. ix. 3. "Compassion" (Heb. *rahāmīm*) means "pity," "fellow feeling" such as ought to be cherished among people of the same kin. Cp. Amos i. 11 (text and marg.), and esp. Gen. xliii. 30, "his bowels (compassions) did yearn upon his brother."

10. *the stranger*] Heb. *gēr*; LXX *προσῆλυτον*. The *gērīm* ("strangers, sojourners," A.V.) were a class of persons mentioned in the text of the Ten Commandments (Exod. xx. 10) and dwelling in Israel under the express protection of the laws (Exod. xxiii. 9). They lived at the court of the king or on the lands of some Hebrew chief powerful enough to protect them; sometimes the case was reversed and Hebrews dwelt as sojourners in other lands; cp. 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4; xxvii. 3; 2 Sam. xv. 19. They were put to hard labour for Solomon's great building schemes (2 Chron. ii. 17), and no doubt great men oppressed them from time to time by using their services for reduced wages or for none at all. Cp. Mal. iii. 5.

*imagine evil*] See Deut. xv. 7—11.

11. *But they refused*] "They" are the men of a previous generation to whom the "former prophets" spoke (cp. v. 8, note).

adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by his spirit by the hand of the former prophets: therefore came there great wrath from the LORD of hosts. And it came <sup>13</sup> to pass that, as he cried, and they would not hear; so they shall cry, and I will not hear, said the LORD of hosts; but I will scatter them with a whirlwind <sup>14</sup> among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the <sup>1</sup>pleasant land desolate.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *land of desire*.

12. *an adamant stone*] Heb. *shāmīr*, which is said to mean the "emery" (Greek *σμίρις*) used by lapidaries.

*the law*] Heb. *torah*; cp. Hag. ii. 11, where the reference is to Divine instruction relating to the cultus and given through the priests. But *torah* is used also of the instruction given by the prophets, which rarely touched ritual matters. Thus in Isa. i. 10, "the word of JEHOVAH" and "the *torah* of our God" are used as parallel and synonymous phrases.

*by his spirit by the hand of the former prophets*] The word came to the prophets by the spirit and was passed on to the people by the prophets.

*therefore came there great wrath*] i.e. a great punishment inflicted in wrath. Cp. 2 Kings iii. 27 marg., with note in *Camb. Bible*.

13, 14. *And it came to pass etc.*] And the saying is come to pass, "As my messenger cried, and they would not hear, so they shall cry and I will not hear, saith JEHOVAH." And I tossed them unto all the nations, whom they had not known, and the land became desolate behind them,...yea the land of desire was made desolate. The opening words are difficult, but they are probably to be translated as above; cp. Prov. i. 24. In the clause, *as he cried*, the subject (since JEHOVAH is the speaker) is no doubt "my messenger," i.e. one of the earlier prophets (cp. i. 4). The rendering, "And I tossed them" (for *but I will scatter them*) depends on a slight change of pointing (so Wellhausen; Driver).

14. *no man passed through nor returned*] No man willingly passed through, and no man having passed through would return that desolate way again.

*the pleasant land*] Better as marg., "the land of desire (*hemdah*)."  
Cp. Ezek. xxiv. 16, 21 ("desire" = *maḥmad*, a cognate word).

- 8 And the word of the LORD of hosts came *to me*, saying,  
 2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion  
 with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great  
 3 fury. Thus saith the LORD: I am returned unto Zion,  
 and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem  
 shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain  
 4 of the LORD of hosts The holy mountain. Thus saith  
 the LORD of hosts: There shall yet old men and old  
 women <sup>1</sup>dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sit*

CH. VIII. 1—8. PROMISES OF THE RESTORATION OF  
 JERUSALEM TO HER FORMER PROSPERITY.

Jerusalem in the Prophet's day was still for the most part in ruins and grievously depopulated; cp. ii. 2, note. Nothing except the "zeal of JEHOVAH" could restore it to any measure of its former prosperity. But Zechariah is assured that if his people repent, JEHOVAH will indeed be zealous on their behalf. So he promises that exiles shall return from east and west to replenish Jerusalem, and that the city shall be at peace and in security again and filled with rejoicing.

With this section should be compared i. 14—17.

1. *came to me*] The words "to me" are absent from most Heb. texts, but they are found in ten Heb. MSS (Ginsburg, *Minor Prophets*, ed. 1910), Targ., Pesh., but not in LXX, Vulg. Cp. vii. 4.

2. *jealousy...fury*] i.e. zeal for the good of Zion...fury to defend Zion against her foes. Cp. i. 14.

3. *I am returned*] Cp. i. 16.

*Zion...and...Jerusalem*] Cp. i. 14, note.

*will dwell*] Cp. ii. 11, note.

*The city of truth*] i.e. the city which keeps its troth to JEHOVAH, and for which JEHOVAH maintains his gracious covenant. Cp. Isa. i. 21, 26.

*the mountain of the LORD of hosts*] Elsewhere called "the mountain of the LORD's house": Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1.

*The holy mountain*] Lit. The mountain of holiness; cp. xiv. 20, 21.

4. *There shall yet old men etc.*] The promise of this ver. that old people shall dwell in Jerusalem together with that of v. 5 that children shall play in the streets gives assurance to Jerusalem that normal peaceful conditions shall prevail in her for the future. The actual conditions of the city were no doubt quite unsafe for persons incapable of bearing arms. Old men might be slaughtered



with his staff in his hand <sup>1</sup>for very age. And the streets 5 of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: If it 6 be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: 7 Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country: and I will bring them, 8 and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness. Thus saith the LORD of 9

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *for multitude of days*.

and children carried off by a sudden incursion of their heathen neighbours. For *dwell in the streets* substitute, "sit in the broad places." The thought is of the old men sitting together in places broad enough for assembly. The usual Eastern street is very narrow. Cp. 1 Macc. xiv. 9, "The ancient men sat in the streets" (*πρεσβύτεροι ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις ἐκάθηντο*).

5. *playing in the streets*] Cp. Matt. xi. 16, 17.

6. *If it be marvellous*] i.e. "impossible." Cp. Gen. xviii. 14, "Is anything too *hard*" (marg. "wonderful").

*in those days*] There is an ellipse here: "If it be impossible in the eyes of the remnant of this people *that it should happen* in those days." "Those days" are the days yet future which JEHOVAH will bring in.

7. *from the east country, and from the west country*] Lit. "from the land of the Dawn and from the land of the Setting Sun," i.e. from the whole earth. Cp. ii. 6, 7.

8. *they shall dwell*] The same Heb. verb as in v. 3. JEHOVAH will "dwell" and his people will "dwell" in Jerusalem in covenant relation, as the second half of the ver. shows; cp. Jer. vii. 23.

*in truth and in righteousness*] JEHOVAH will be true to his people and perform acts of righteousness for them, and conversely his people will be true to him, and will act righteously one to another; cp. v. 16; vii. 9, 10.

#### 9—17. THE COVENANT OF GREAT PROMISES AND THE CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO IT.

The future Peace of Jerusalem and Judah depends on the maintenance of Truth and Righteousness. But let Judah persevere in the righteousness which JEHOVAH demands, and then she shall be an object of admiration to be sought by all nations.



hosts: Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, even the temple, that  
 10 it might be built. For before those days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the adversary: for I set all men every one against  
 11 his neighbour. But now I will not be unto the remnant of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD  
 12 of hosts. For *there shall be* the seed of peace; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.  
 13 And it shall come to pass that, as ye were a curse among

9. *Let your hands be strong*] Cp. v. 13; Hag. ii. 4. If Zechariah was speaking in the fourth year of Darius (vii. 1) the people were now in the middle of their task and needed encouragement.

*which were in the day*] Rather, **which were spoken concerning the day**. The reference is to the words, not to the prophets. LXX "since the day" (ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας).

*even the temple, that it might be built*] Rather, **the temple shall be built**; lit. "is for building." These are the "words from the mouth of the prophets"; they are a promise that the work shall be carried to a successful conclusion.

10. *there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast*] There was no (sufficient) return for the labour of man and beast in the field; cp. Hag. i. 6; ii. 16. The same Heb. word (*sāchār*, "hire") is rendered "wages" in Ezek. xxix. 18, 19.

*any peace*] i.e. "safety"; cp. Jud. v. 6.

*for I set*] Or, **and I let loose**. Cp. (for the expression) Job xxx. 11, "they have let loose the bridle before me."

11. *now I will not be*] Rather, **now I am not**.

12. *For there shall be the seed of peace*] By a change of pointing in one word we read, **For peace is sown**; cp. Ps. xcvi. 11, "Light is sown for the righteous," i.e. is destined to be his portion. An era of peace is being prepared in the counsels of God for Judah. Van Hoonacker (without change of reading) takes "seed" (Heb. *zera'*) in the sense of "seed-time" as in Gen. viii. 22, *car ce sont les semailles de la paix*.

*their dew*] See Hag. i. 10, note.

13. *a curse among the nations*] i.e. a name used by the nations to point a curse with. Cp. Jer. xxix. 22.

the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* let your hands be strong. For thus saith the <sup>14</sup> LORD of hosts: As I thought to do evil unto you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not; so again have I thought <sup>15</sup> in these days to do good unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not. These are the things <sup>16</sup> that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbour; <sup>1</sup>execute the judgement of truth and peace in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil <sup>17</sup> in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *judge truth and the judgement of peace.*

*and house of Israel]* Zechariah does not regard the ten tribes as "lost"; the final breach between Jew and Samaritan was the event of a later time.

*a blessing]* i.e. a name used to point a blessing. Cp. Gen. xlviii. 20.

*fear not]* Cp. i. 21.

*let your hands be strong]* i.e. in the rebuilding of the Temple and in other works; cp. Hag. ii. 4.

**14.** *As I thought]* Cp. i. 6, note.

*to do evil]* "to punish," A.V., but R.V. is more accurate. The prophets do not hesitate to trace physical evil to the hand of God; cp. Isa. xlv. 7, "I make peace and create evil"; Amos iii. 6, "Shall evil befall a city, and JEHOVAH hath not done it?"

*I repented not]* Cp. Jonah iii. 10. "Repent" is used in the general sense: "change one's mind." Even so the expression is anthropomorphic.

**16.** *Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbour]* Cp. Ephes. iv. 25. This is the positive form of the precept; negatively it runs, "let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour"; v. 17.

*execute the judgement of truth and peace]* Lit. "judge truth and the judgement of peace." The demand is for righteous judgement. Zechariah repeats the teaching which the earlier prophets had given; cp. vii. 9, 10.

**17.** *love no false oath]* A stronger expression than, "swear no false oath." Perjury was a cherished sin among the contemporaries of the Prophet; cp. v. 3, 4.

- 18 And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me,  
 19 saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: The fast of  
 the fourth *month*, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast  
 of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to  
 the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful  
 20 feasts; therefore love truth and peace. Thus saith the  
 LORD of hosts: *It shall yet come to pass*, that there  
 shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of <sup>1</sup>many cities:  
 21 and the inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another,  
 saying, Let us go speedily to intreat the favour of the  
 LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also.  
 22 Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to  
 seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to intreat  
 23 the favour of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts:  
 In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall

<sup>1</sup> Or, *great*

#### 18—23. THE FINAL PROMISE FOR JERUSALEM.

19. *The fast of the fourth month, etc.*] Cp. vii. 5, note.

*shall be...cheerful feasts (seasons)*] Zechariah teaches that neither fast nor feast is of any spiritual value apart from righteousness (vii. 5, 6). Probably the Prophet intends his promise in its literal sense. If Judah will indeed amend her ways and love "truth and peace," there will no longer be any place for fasts.

20. *many cities*] Better as marg. **great cities**, Heb. *rabbōth*. *Rabbah* (fem. sing.) is used sometimes as a proper name for important cities; cp. 2 Sam. xii. 26.

21. *shall go*] The Heb. verb (*wě-hālěchū*) is hardly so colourless as the English; cp. Isa. ii. 3; xxxv. 9 ("walk"). A substantive from the same root is used in Ps. lxviii. 24 [25]. There is a suggestion of a solemn going as of worshippers or pilgrims.

*Let us go speedily*] The Hebrew repeats the verb to express urgency, **Let us go, go!** "Go *speedily*" is a paraphrase and not quite successful; the meaning is, "Let us not sit still, but go!"

*to intreat the favour of the Lord*] The same phrase is found in vii. 2, where LXX gives ἐξιλάσασθαι τὸν κύριον, Vulg. *ad deprecandam faciem Domini*. The original meaning is perhaps, "to turn away the anger of **JEHOVAH**"; cp. i. 15.

*to seek the Lord*] This phrase suggests a step in advance of the last; cp. Deut. iv. 29; Ps. xxvii. 8; cv. 3, 4; Zeph. ii. 3.

22. *many peoples etc.*] Cp. Mic. iv. 2, 3.

23. *shall take hold*] Or, "cling to." The action implies urgency; cp. Isa. iv. 1.

take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, shall even take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

*the skirt]* Heb. *kānāph*. The Heb. word means the *border* or *edge* of a shawl or similar garment worn by Easterns. It is the word used in Deut. xxii. 12, "Thou shalt make thee fringes (twisted threads) upon the four *borders* of thy vesture."

*God is with you]* Zechariah in reporting the speech of Gentiles does not use the name JEHOVAH, but uses the word *Elōhim*, which is applied to the gods of the heathen as well as to the God of Israel. For the thought of this ver. cp. Gen. xxvi. 28.



- 9 The <sup>1</sup>burden of the word of the LORD upon the land of Hadrach, and Damascus *shall be* its resting place: for <sup>2</sup>the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel is

<sup>1</sup> Or, *oracle*      <sup>2</sup> Or, *the LORD hath an eye upon men and upon all the tribes of Israel*

## SEQUEL TO THE BOOK.

### CHS. IX.—XIV. THE PROPHECIES OF ZECHARIAH THE DISCIPLE.

For a discussion of the relation of these chapters to Zech. i.—viii. see Introduction, § 3.

#### CH. IX. 1—8. A PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE FROM THE PHOENICIANS AND THE PHILISTINES.

Too little attention is usually paid to the sufferings of Judah at the hands of the small heathen nations on her borders. The Assyrian oppression and the Babylonian exile receive due consideration, but the continuous pressure of heathen neighbours which extended over centuries is often overlooked. Yet the Prophets, both major and minor, and the Psalmists also, bear witness to it. The oppressors of Judah were "Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines with them that dwell at Tyre" (Ps. lxxxiii. 7). Joel complains that Tyre and Philistia have sold the children of Judah to the sons of the Grecians (*Bēnē ha-Yēvānīm*, Joel iii. 4—6). Zechariah the younger, like Joel, complains of the inhabitants of Israel's sea-border, and promises deliverance from them.

1. *The burden...the LORD*] Marg. (for "burden") "oracle." Heb. *massa*. The same title appears xii. 1; Mal. i. 1. Perhaps the best rendering is "The utterance of the word of the LORD." The Heb. *massa* comes from the verb *nāsā*, "he took up, carried, laid," which is used of immaterial objects in such passages as Numb. xxiii. 7, "[Balaam] *took up* his parable"; 2 Kings ix. 25, 26, "The LORD *uttered* this oracle (*massa*) against him....I will requite thee"; Ezek. xxvi. 17, "they shall *take up* a lamentation for thee." The reference is in each case to an utterance of an important kind either a threat or a warning. *Massa* is used sometimes to describe the action, "utterance," sometimes the thing uttered, which when it is of the nature of a sentence of judgement on a nation or on an individual is quite suitably called a "burden" as a thing to be taken up and borne. The Rabbinic commentator Rashi gives "purport" as the rendering.

toward the LORD: and Hamath also which bordereth <sup>2</sup> thereon: Tyre and Zidon, <sup>1</sup>because she is very wise. And Tyre did build herself a strong hold, and heaped <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *though*

1, 2. *upon the land...Tyre and Zidon*] Rather, **against the land of Hadrach, and against him whose resting place is Damascus (for the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel is towards JEHOVAH), against Hamath also which bordereth thereon, against Tyre and Zidon.** The prophecy contained in vv. 3—7 is directed against the coast cities of Palestine especially against Tyre and Zidon which held the chief place among them. The passage might have been headed simply, "The Burden of Tyre and of the Philistines." The Prophet however follows the procedure of Amos, who in his prophecy against Israel announces the punishment of seven other guilty nations before he comes to his proper theme (Amos i. 3—ii. 5). Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath form together the "Hinterland" of the Phoenician coast and are appropriately named here as districts which must needs be affected by any calamity which should fall upon Tyre and Zidon. *Hadrach* is mentioned in the O.T. only in this passage; it is usually identified with the land of *Hatarika* (or *Hatarakka*) of the monuments, which Assyriologists place conjecturally south of Hamath. Instead of the phrase, *against him whose resting place is Damascus*, the author might have written simply, "against the inhabitant (inhabitants) of Damascus," but he wishes to convey the fact that the people of Damascus are "resting" and at ease, little deeming that a calamity is about to overtake Tyre, which will involve them also. Further the Prophet says that he utters his Oracle as an answer to the silent questioning eyes of Israel. The prosperity of Tyre constituted in fact a standing mora' difficulty to the Jews. Why should this city, so unscrupulously devoted to the pursuit of wealth, go unscathed, while the people of JEHOVAH suffered one calamity after another?

2. *because (though) she is very wise*] Tyre for all her wisdom cannot avert the coming doom; cp. Ezek. xxviii. 2—7. Similar words are used respecting the fate of Babylon in Isa. xlvii. 10, 11.

3. *a strong hold*] The special reference is probably to the island city of Tyre distant about half-a-mile from the mainland on which Old Tyre stood. New Tyre was a very strong fortress which resisted Alexander the Great for seven months in 332 B.C. It was only taken after a causeway had been built from the mainland and new and powerful engines had been used against the walls. Strabo (xvi. 2. 23, p. 756) writes, *Τύρος δ' ἐστὶν ὅλη νῆσος... συνήπται δὲ χώματι πρὸς τὴν ἡπειρον, ὃ κατεσκεύασε πολιορκῶν Ἀλέξανδρος* "Tyre is wholly an island but it has been connected with the

up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will dispossess her, and he will smite <sup>1</sup>her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire. Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also, and shall be sore pained; and Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed: and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And <sup>2</sup>a bastard shall <sup>3</sup>dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the sea which is her rampart* Or, *her rampart into the sea*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *a bastard race*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *sit as king*

mainland by a causeway which Alexander made when he besieged the city."

*fine gold*] The word used is not the common Heb. word for "gold" (*zāhāb*), but the word *ḥārūṣ* which is rare in O.T. but found several times in Phoenician inscriptions.

4. *the Lord*] Heb. *Adonai* not *JEHOVAH*. This again may be an accommodation to Phoenician speech in which the title "Lord" (*Adon*) is given to deities.

*will dispossess her*] Tyre was certainly "dispossessed" when Alexander captured the island city; whether she suffered a similar disaster about the time of this "burden" is not known. The history of Tyre is but a bare and broken outline.

*will smite her power in the sea*] The great opponents by sea of the Phoenicians during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. were the Greeks, for the Tyrians for the most part acted as loyal tributaries to the Persian kings. Acc. to Herod. vii. 89 the *Phoenicians together with the Syrians who dwell in Palestine* (i.e. Philistia) supplied Xerxes with 300 out of the 1207 ships of which his expedition against Greece (480 B.C.) consisted.

5. *Ashkelon*] Four Philistine cities are enumerated in *vv.* 5, 6, and the same four again in Zeph. ii. 4. The fifth leading city—Gath (cp. 1 Sam. vi. 17, 18)—is not mentioned; it may be that it no longer existed. As for the Philistines in general it is probable that from the Chaldean period they began to lose their character as a separate people and to be absorbed in the population of "Canaan" (i.e. the sea-coast); cp. Zeph. ii. 5. With this agree the words of *v.* 6, "a bastard race (Heb. *mamzer*) shall dwell in Ashdod" (R.V. marg.); the Prophet has seen the beginning of the condition which he describes. Politically the Philistine cities (and especially Ashkelon) tended to fall under the leadership of Tyre. The Prophet accordingly says in this passage that the overthrow of Tyre fills the Philistines with dismay.

6. *the pride of the Philistines*] The Philistines appear first on



his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth; and he also shall be a remnant for our God: and he shall be as a chieftain in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. And I will encamp about mine <sup>8</sup> house <sup>1</sup>against the army, that none pass through or return: and no <sup>2</sup>oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

<sup>1</sup> Or, as otherwise read, *as a garrison*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *exactor*

the stage of history as conquerors and warriors; they are last seen as traffickers like the Phoenicians. Gaza the most southerly of their cities (on the Egyptian border) was a great mart down to Christian times.

7. *I will take away his blood*] The Philistines were considered by the Jews an unclean people partly because they were uncircumcised (Jud. xiv. 3; *al.*), partly because they ate food forbidden by the Law, particularly the blood of sacrificial victims (cp. Ps. xvi. 4; Ezek. xxxiii. 25). Here the promise is that some of the Philistines (the inhabitants of Ekron) shall be purified and united as proselytes to Israel.

*a remnant*] A threefold fate is to overtake the Philistines. First, many shall perish in the calamity which is to overtake Tyre. Others again shall be absorbed in the Canaanite population. Finally, a remnant shall be saved and be incorporated in Judah as the Jebusites were incorporated when David took the strong hold of Zion (2 Sam. v. 6 ff.).

*as a chieftain in Judah*] ὡς χιλιάρχος ἐν Ἰουδᾷ, "as the head of a thousand," LXX. The Heb. word *allūph* ("chieftain") is cognate with *elep*h, "a thousand."

*Ekron*] The reason for which Ekron is singled out for incorporation in Judah lies in its geographical position, as it is well described by G. A. Smith, *H.G.H.L.*, page 193: "Ekron, the modern 'Akir...a site on the northern frontier of Philistia in the vale of Sorek, where a pass breaks through the low hills to Ramleh.... E. had the double fortune of a sanctuary with a market on a good trade route. E. was nearer the territory of Israel than the other Philistine towns."

8. *And I will encamp about mine house against the army*] The general sense that JEHOVAH will protect his house (the newly restored temple) is clear, but the reading of the Heb. word rendered *against the army* (marg. *as a garrison*) is uncertain. In Isa. xxix. 3 *I will camp* is used in a hostile sense, but it cannot be so here.

*oppressor*] Marg. *exactor*. The cognate Heb. word is used in 2 Kings xxiii. 35.

*now have I seen with mine eyes*] Cp. iv. 10.

- 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and <sup>1</sup>having <sup>2</sup>salvation; lowly, and riding upon an

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *saved*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *victory*

9—17. THE PROMISE TO ZION OF A KING WHO SHALL BRING PEACE.

This passage is very like Isa. ix. 1—7. It holds out the hope (1) of the coming of a king who is lowly as well as victorious; (2) of the beginning of an era of peace; (3) of a return of exiles; (4) of a triumph over the Oppressor by the help of JEHOVAH.

9. *Rejoice greatly*] Cp. ii. 10.

*shout*] A word expressing worship. It occurs several times in the Psalter, e.g. in Ps. c. 1: "*Make a joyful noise unto the LORD.*"

*thy king*] Of whom does the Prophet speak? *Ex hypothesi* this passage belongs to circ. 500 B.C., when Judah had no visible king but Darius. But though the Jews believed that the Persian monarch had a friendly disposition towards the Temple at Jerusalem (Ezra vi. 1—12), the language of this prophecy would undoubtedly apply best to some other ruler.

A human ruler must be meant, though the title "king" is given to JEHOVAH in several passages of the O.T.; e.g. Ps. v. 2; xlvii. 2; Isa. xxxiii. 17, 22. The reference is not to the God of Israel, but to one whom the God of Israel designates as "king" (Ps. ii. 6) by anticipation. He is introduced with special Divine promises of a rule wide in extent as that of Solomon and marked by disarmament and peace. "Zechariah" lived at a time at which the prophecies of earlier prophets could be appealed to (i. 4—6; vii. 7; 12), and it can hardly be doubted that he is here reiterating the hope expressed by Isaiah (Isa. ix. 6, 7).

*cometh unto thee*] Rather, **shall come for thee**. The promise is *not* for the immediate future, as the rendering "cometh" suggests. The king comes for the advantage of Zion ("for thee") in his character of a just, lowly, and peaceful ruler, no "exactor"; cp. v. 8, marg.

*having salvation*] Marg. *having victory*. Rather, **saved**, a passive participle. Cp. Deut. xxxiii. 29, "Israel...a people *saved* by the LORD"; also Ps. xx. 6, "the LORD *saveth* (act. partic. from the same root) his anointed." LXX (σώζων) and other versions miss the point. Zion's king is under JEHOVAH's special protection.

*lowly*] Heb. 'ānī. The word means "poor, of low estate"; πτωχός, Symmachus. Since however the pious in Israel when they are spoken of as afflicted by the wicked are called not seldom "the poor," the word 'ānī gains a quasi-moral sense. In this

ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off <sup>10</sup> the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from <sup>1</sup>the River to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant <sup>11</sup> I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. <sup>2</sup>Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners <sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Ex. xxiii. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Return*

passage there is an implied contradiction in terms, "a lowly—king!"

*riding upon an ass*] In contrast to the warlike king, who comes with chariots and horses. See the following verse.

10. *I will cut off*] Vulg. *disperdam*. If this reading is right, JEHOVAH is the speaker, and the destruction of the weapons of war is his immediate work. But LXX, Pesh. give the third person, "he (the king) will destroy."

*I will cut off the chariot...the horse...and the battle bow*] The reference to these instruments of war does not imply that "Ephraim" and "Jerusalem" were equipped for war at the time at which the prophecy was delivered. Rather the Prophet is meeting in advance a misunderstanding of his message on the part of his people. As soon as the Jews heard the word "king" they would think of war, for in ancient states a king was above all things a leader in war (1 Sam. viii. 20). The first half of this verse is simply an amplification of ch. iv. 6, "not by an army, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD." The revival of Judah which JEHOVAH promises is not to come about by war.

*he shall speak peace*] The subject is changed from JEHOVAH to the king, but the king holds authority from JEHOVAH and acts accordingly. He "speaks" (or "declares") *peace* (in contrast to other kings who declare war), and the nations hear and obey.

*from sea to sea*] So Ps. lxxii. 8. Probably from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean (Exod. xxiii. 31).

*the River*] i.e. the Euphrates; Exod. xxiii. 31; 1 Kings iv. 24.

#### 11—17. PROMISE OF A RETURN OF EXILES TO JERUSALEM AND OF THE FUTURE GLORY OF THE CITY.

11. *As for thee also...I have sent forth thy prisoners*] Rather, **Thou, thou also, hast led forth (escorted) thy prisoners.** Zion is addressed; she has received her released captives; cp. ii. 7.

*the pit wherein is no water*] A grim description of a dungeon where no drinking water is given.

12. *Turn you to the strong hold*] Rather, **Return ye to**

of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render  
 13 double unto thee. For I have bent Judah for me,  
 I have filled the bow with Ephraim; and I will stir  
 up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O <sup>1</sup>Greece, and

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Javan*.

**Him who is a strong hold**; cp. marg. The "prisoners of hope" (i.e. the exiles who hope to be released) are exhorted to turn to their God with a fresh act of faith and allegiance. JEHOVAH is called a *strong hold* here, just as in Ps. xviii. 2 the Psalmist says, "JEHOVAH is my rock, and my fortress, ... my strong rock, ... my high tower." Elsewhere in the Psalter he is frequently called "a place of refuge" (Heb. *maḥāseh*); Ps. xiv. 6; *al*. The Vulg. agrees with marg., *convertimini ad munitionem*.

The interpretation of LXX (= Pesh.) is inferior: καθήσθε (reading *shēbū* for *shūbū*) ἐν ὀχυρώμασιν, i.e. remain patiently in your strong holds (or possibly *prisons*) until JEHOVAH comes to your help.

*I will render double*] A new joy for every past sorrow. Cp. Isa. xl. 2; lxi. 3, "a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

13. *For I have bent Judah*] i.e. as a bow. The Prophet turns back to portray the events which must precede the coming of Zion's King announced already in v. 9.

*I have filled the bow with Ephraim*] Rather, **I have drawn Ephraim as a bow with my full strength**. The rendering of E.V. suggests that Judah is the bow, and Ephraim the arrow, but the reference to the arrows does not come until the following clause. The union of Judah with Ephraim is so close (cp. x. 6; xi. 14), that either of them indifferently may be spoken of as the Bow directed against the common Enemy.

*I will stir up thy sons*] Rather, **I will aim (or shoot) thy sons** (as arrows). A similar use of the Heb. verb is found in 2 Sam. xxiii. 18, "He *lifted* (or *stirred*) *up* his spear against three hundred." For the comparison between "sons" and "arrows" see Ps. cxxvii. 4.

*against thy sons, O Greece (Yavan)*] It is better to reproduce the Heb. word than to translate it by *Greece*, for *Greece* suggests to the general reader a particular part of eastern Europe. *Yavan* on the contrary has no such limitation of meaning. The "sons of Yavan" (Gen. x. 4 = 1 Chron. i. 7) were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, Dodanim (*v.l.* Rodanim), sea-faring peoples of the eastern and western Mediterranean of more than one race, but with a large Greek element. Etymologically *Yavan* = Ἰάονες, Ἴωνες, the Ionians, many of whom had their seat in western Asia Minor. Cp. Introduction § 3. *Yavan* is a better form than *Javan*.

The rendering of LXX, ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα τῶν Ἑλλήνων, suggests that

will make thee as the sword of a mighty man. And <sup>14</sup> the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall <sup>15</sup> devour, and shall tread down the sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine: and they shall be filled like bowls, like the corners of the

the Septuagint had before them as the Heb. reading '*al bēnē Yāvān* i.e. "against the sons of Yavan." The acceptance of this reading removes a difficulty from the context. If we read *thy sons* here, the following clause, *I will make thee as the sword of a mighty man*, is addressed (it seems) to Yavan, and the two clauses contradict one another.

*as the sword of a mighty man*] i.e. triumphant over thy foes. The person addressed is ZION. The mighty man did not use his sword until the enemy had been put to flight by the bow; the sword was used in the pursuit; it was therefore a symbol of victory.

14. *the LORD shall be seen over them*] This particular turn of the Prophet's language is due no doubt to a form of religious representation which was common among the Assyrians and was taken over from them by the Persians. There are still preserved several Assyrian reliefs representing battles, which show in the air above the human combatants the figure of a god (Asshur) or a goddess (Ishtar) who is giving supernatural help to the Assyrians. See also the frontispiece to this book, a relief which represents the triumph of Darius as due to the help of Auramazda. Lightnings are proceeding from the god against the conquered foes.

*with whirlwinds*] The whirlwind is JEHOVAH's weapon against his foes; cp. Ps. lxxxiii. 15, "So pursue them with thy *tempest*" (lit. "whirlwind").

*of the south*] Heb. "of Tēmān." The south of Judah (called the *Negeb*) and the Edomite country (*Teman*) which bordered on it was, as it were, the home of the whirlwind; cp. Isa. xxi. 1; Hab. iii. 3 ff.

15. *they shall devour...stones*] Rather, **And the sling stones** (i.e. the hail-stones which JEHOVAH casts when He comes with the tempest) **shall devour and tread down** the enemy. For the metaphor cp. 2 Sam. xviii. 8.

*they shall drink*] i.e. the LORD's missiles shall drink blood. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 42, "I will make my arrows drunk with blood"; Isa. xxxiv. 5, "my sword hath drunk its fill."

*they shall be filled like bowls*] i.e. filled with blood like the

- 16 altar. And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for *they shall be as* the stones of a crown, <sup>1</sup>lifted on high over his land. For how great is <sup>2</sup>his <sup>3</sup>goodness, and how great is <sup>2</sup>his beauty! corn shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the maids.
- 10 Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain, *even of* the LORD that maketh lightnings; and he shall

<sup>1</sup> Or, *glittering upon &c.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *their*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *prosperity*

bowls used in the Jewish sacrifices. The blood of the victim was caught *in a bowl* and cast against the altar. So the "corners" of the altar also became drenched with blood when many sacrifices were performed.

16. *they shall be as the stones of a crown*] Zion (Jerusalem) is the crown; the inhabitants the jewels. Cp. Exod. xxviii. 15—21 (description of the high priest's breastplate).

*lifted on high over his land*] A.V. "lifted up as an ensign." An "ensign" is a sign of the presence of the king, in this case of the heavenly king. But "ensign" is not to be taken in the literal sense. Here it is the body of returned exiles gathered on Mount Zion, which serves as JEHOVAH's ensign, the sign of His presence in His land. In another prophetic passage it is a prince of the house of David who performs the part of the ensign of the LORD (Isa. xi. 10).

17. *how great...his beauty!*] **How great shall be their prosperity and...their beauty!** The reference is to the restored community of Judah.

*corn shall make etc.*] Resolving the poetic parallelism we may paraphrase as follows, "corn and new wine shall bring forth fruit, even young men and maidens." Renewed fertility of the soil will result in a growth of the population, both of young men and of maidens.

#### CH. X. 1, 2. A WARNING AGAINST SUPERSTITION.

In times of drought and other calamity the Jews turned (like other peoples of the ancient world) to superstitious practices. For references to drought cp. vii. 2 (note); Hag. i. 9—11; ii. 16, 17.

1. *Ask ye of the LORD rain*] The stress is on *the LORD*. The Prophet is warning against superstition: "Do not," he says, "seek to obtain rain by magic, but ask for it—at the right season—of JEHOVAH!"

*that maketh...of rain*] Rather, **That maketh clouds** (cp. A.V.), **and appointeth to them rain for showers.** According to the



give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the <sup>2</sup>diviners have seen a lie; and <sup>1</sup>they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain: therefore they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd. Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the dreamers speak falsely*

usual text, which is probably right, there is no promise, "he shall give." But three Heb. MSS and the Peshitta read "to you" for "to them," and with this reading we must translate, "and he shall *give you* showers of rain." This reading however misses the point of the Prophet's appeal to natural phenomena, for he is laying stress on the wonder of the storm clouds, to which the LORD gives showers.

*to every one grass in the field]* **that every one may have grass in the field.**

2. *the teraphim]* The Heb. word *tērāphim* is left untranslated in R.V., but A.V. has "idols"; Vulg. *simulacra*. LXX gives *οἱ ἀποφθεγγόμενοι*, "they who give an oracle or response." The word is plural in form, and is probably plural (or dual) in meaning. The *teraphim* were religious objects, perhaps images, which were used in order to obtain oracular decisions; cp. Ezek. xxi. 21 (xxi. 26, Heb.). Laban had them in his household (Gen. xxxi. 19); and David (1 Sam. xix. 13). Their use was not reckoned in early days to be inconsistent with the worship of JEHOVAH.

*false dreams]* Deut. xiii. 1—3; cp. Jer. xxiii. 25.

*they go their way like sheep]* Lit. "they journey like sheep." Sheep cannot exist in a country like Palestine without being continually led to "pastures new," for the grass is very quickly consumed by the flock or burnt up by the sun. Sheep are travellers over considerable distances; cp. Gen. xxxvii. 12—17; Exod. iii. 1; Ps. lxxviii. 52.

*they are afflicted]* **they cry out**; lit., "they answer." A vivid picture of the ways of sheep.

*no shepherd]* No true leader, though nominal "shepherds" existed; cp. v. 3.

**3—12. FROM JEHOVAH WILL COME LEADERS WHO WILL BRING BACK THE EXILES FROM EGYPT AND ASSYRIA.**

3. *Mine anger...and I will punish]* This clause in which JEHOVAH speaks in the first person is probably to be understood as a quotation (not verbal but according to the sense) of some earlier prophetic announcement, e.g. cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 1—17 and especially v. 10.

*the shepherds]* Such as the priests and prophets; cp. vii. 3.



and I will punish the he-goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and shall  
 4 make them as his goodly horse in the battle. From him shall come forth the corner stone, from him the nail, from him the battle bow, from him every <sup>1</sup>exactor  
 5 together. And they shall be as mighty men, treading down *their enemies* in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight, because the LORD is with them: and the riders on horses shall be confounded.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *ruler*

*the he-goats*] Subordinate leaders of the people; cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 17.

*his goodly horse*] Or, *his glorious horse*. Cp. the description of the war-horse in Job xxxix. 19—25.

4. *From him*] From JEHOVAH.

*the corner stone*] Here, as in Ps. cxviii. 22, "corner stone" is probably used in a metaphorical sense to signify the chief ruler of Zion for the time being, whether one of the house of David like Zerubbabel or a priest like Joshua.

*the nail*] Heb. *yāthēd*, "a large nail" or "peg." The word is used metaphorically of a leader or head of a household, because others *depend* on him; cp. Isa. xxii. 23—25 (an interesting passage).

*the battle bow*] The bow was Israel's national weapon; cp. Hos. i. 5. "Battle bow" is used symbolically here for the armed might of JEHOVAH's people.

*exactor*] Heb. *nōgēs*. The *nōgēs* is one who exacts from the people (1) taxes, cp. 2 Kings xxiii. 35; (2) forced labour, cp. Exod. iii. 7; (3) military service, as in the present passage. Here the "exactors" correspond to the "scribes" of 1 Macc. v. 42, who had to see that none of the army of Judas Maccabaeus shirked the fighting. The Prophet says that all the army of Judah, Commander, subordinate officers, rank and file, and provost marshal, come from JEHOVAH. All authority is from Him.

5. *and they shall fight*] This promise is dependent upon the preceding one that JEHOVAH would Himself find a leader and officers for the people. Judah, as the Prophet describes it in v. 2 is wholly unfit for war. The victorious fighting is probably to be conceived as a victory over Judah's hostile neighbours in Palestine, but the brevity of the reference does not allow us to say more. The victory of Judah is followed by a return of Jewish and Israelite exiles; cp. vv. 6—8.

*the riders on horses*] The powerful Gentile forces which fight against Judah. Judah on the other hand fights with the bow; cp. ix. 13.

And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will <sup>1</sup>bring them again, for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and I will hear them. And *they of Ephraim* shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and rejoice; their heart shall be glad in the LORD. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. <sup>2</sup>And I will sow them among the peoples; and they shall remember me in far countries: and they shall live with their children, and shall return. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and *place* shall not be

<sup>1</sup> Or, *cause them to dwell*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *And though I sow them...they shall remember &c.*

6. *I will bring them again*] From captivity, if the reading is sound; so Peshitta. Another reading, found in three Heb. MSS. (Ginsburg) and the LXX (καὶ κατοικίῳ αὐτοῦς), is represented in the margin, "I will cause them to dwell," i.e. securely and safely in Palestine.

*I will hear them*] Lit. "I will answer them," i.e. I will be responsive to them.

7. *their children shall see it*] **They shall see their children.** A promise of the increase of the people; cp. v. 8.

8. *I will hiss for them*] The verb means to give a whistling sound, such as a shepherd gives with a pipe to attract the attention of his sheep. Cp. Jud. v. 16, "Why satest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the pipings ("hissings") for the flocks?"

9. *And I will sow them*] JEHOVAH will still make Ephraim fruitful on foreign soil, as he was of old in the land of Egypt; Exod. i. 7, 12. The prophet Jeremiah gave a charge to the Jews on this very subject; Jer. xxix. 6.

*they shall live*] Rather, **they shall revive.**

10. *into the land of Gilead and Lebanon*] *Gilead and Lebanon* are used as symbolic names representing (a) all that was most desirable and most beautiful in the Holy Land; Num. xxxii. 1; Jer. xxii. 6, (b) the districts which had been lost longest to Israel. JEHOVAH holds forth the prospect of a complete restoration of the land to his people, on the condition no doubt of their full repentance for the past.

*place shall not be found*] Cp. Isa. xlix. 19—21.

11 found for them. And he shall pass through the sea of affliction, and shall smite <sup>1</sup>the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt  
12 shall depart away. And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the sea of waves*

11. *the sea of affliction*] Lit. "the sea-straitness" (the substantives in apposition), "the strait sea," which makes return difficult. It might be paraphrased, "the sundering sea." The Heb. *yām* ("sea") is applied to great rivers. No doubt the reference here, as in Jer. li. 36, 37 is to the Euphrates.

*the waves in the sea*] Lit. "the sea-waves" (in apposition), i.e. the stormy sea. Heavy storms occur on the Euphrates.

*Assyria...Egypt*] In the time of Zechariah both these countries were provinces (sometimes revolted provinces) of the Persian empire. But since both of them were responsible more directly than the remote king of Persia for the treatment of the Jewish exiles the Prophet's threats are addressed not inappropriately to them.

*the sceptre of Egypt*] Rather, *the rod of Egypt*, glancing at the old oppression in the days of Moses. The same Heb. word, *shēbet*, is used in Isa. ix. 4, "the rod of his oppressor."

12. *they shall walk up and down*] Or, (simply) **they shall walk**. To "walk" in Biblical language embraces the whole of life and conduct; cp. Rev. iii. 4, "they shall walk (*περιπατήσουσιν*) with me in white"; Rev. xxi. 24. The versions however found difficulty in the word; LXX *κατακαυχήσονται* (as though from a different reading) "they shall make their boast," while the Peshitta gives, "they shall *tell* (preach) his name."

## CH. XI.

In contrast to ch. x. which is full of promise and reassurance ch. xi. is a passage of judgement. It begins with a vivid reminiscence of a past judgement—the greatest but one in Jewish history—when the Chaldeans broke into the land from the north and east, took Jerusalem, destroyed Solomon's temple, and carried the house of David into captivity in Babylon. *Vv.* 1—3 certainly belong to this chapter, for they serve as an overture to it. We hear in them the first sounds of the approach of doom: as the enemy enters the land he hews down the cedars of Lebanon in the north, and the oaks of Bashan in the east fall with a crash. The Jordan valley which approaches so near to Jerusalem itself is spoiled. The land is overrun by the invader, and the

Prophet reminds his people that all this happens by the will of God, who tells his prophet to cry, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon."

The view of Wellhausen that vv. 1—3 are a continuation of chap. x. and that they contain a lamentation of the Gentiles over their defeat is rightly rejected by van Hoonacker, who writes, "Rien n'empêche certes que les cèdres et les cyprès de Liban, les chênes de Basan, représentent le peuple de Jahvé, en particulier les grands parmi le peuple,...d'autre part il semble impossible, en notre passage, d'entendre *l'orgueil du Jourdain* ...de la gloire des peuples païens" (*Petits Prophètes*, p. 671).

The Prophet continues his warning discourse in v. 4 on the same lines. Again he hears the imperative which announces the Divine will, "Feed the flock destined to slaughter." Though JEHOVAH allows the enemy to enter and conquer Judah, He still cares for His people, and cries out for some chief shepherd to take care of His afflicted ones. The under-shepherds were only making gain of them, and using JEHOVAH's name at the very time at which they were carrying out their acts of oppression (v. 5). And so JEHOVAH announced His intention of punishing these "inhabitants of the land," men who had established themselves on their great estates by adding "house to house, and field to field" (v. 6). But still JEHOVAH as shepherd over all shepherds strove to tend the flock with the help of two staves, the first named *Beauty* being the Priesthood, the second named *Bands* being the house of David, but this effort failed through the unworthiness of the instruments. The three last kings ("shepherds"), Jehoiakim, Coniah, and Zedekiah were cut off in a short space, as it were "one month," because the chief shepherd had no pleasure in them, nor they in him. So the Babylonian captivity came, priesthood and kingdom were broken in the stress of war, and only the poor sheep who saw their oppressors led away captive could understand what it was that Jehovah had done (vv. 9—11).

It was at this time that Judah definitely rejected JEHOVAH in the person of His representative the prophet Jeremiah. Of the last king, Zedekiah, it is said in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12 that "he humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of JEHOVAH." So again after the fall of Jerusalem the Jews under Johanan the son of Kareah repeated their act of Rejection. They did indeed inquire of the prophet the word of the LORD, but when they heard it they refused to obey it and they dragged off Jeremiah to Egypt as though he were their slave (Jer. xlii. 1—xliii. 7). JEHOVAH in the person of Jeremiah was treated as a slave, whose value according to the ancient law was 30 pieces of silver (Exod. xxi. 32). So again JEHOVAH in the person of Jeremiah is represented as holding the money publicly in the Temple and there casting it away to the potter (whose trade was lightly esteemed) and so refusing to put it into the treasury (vv. 12, 13). The succeeding verse (v. 14)

- 11 Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour  
 2 thy cedars. Howl, O fir tree, for the cedar is fallen,  
 because the <sup>1</sup>goodly ones are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks  
 3 of Bashan, for the <sup>2</sup>strong forest is come down. A voice  
 of the howling of the shepherds! for their glory is spoiled:  
 a voice of the roaring of young lions! for the pride of

<sup>1</sup> Or, *glorious*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *defenced*

seems to be written down out of its place. In the oral discourse which is here reproduced its natural place would be after *v. 11*.

The reason why the past judgement of JEHOVAH on Judah is so fully and vividly represented in the preceding dialogue (*vv. 1—14*) is because the Prophet sees that the conditions of his own time call for a repetition of this judgement. Once more the man whom JEHOVAH raises up to be shepherd over His sheep proves false to his trust. Instead of a protector he shows himself to be an oppressor. So the talents given him to be used for government will be taken from him. The controlling arm will lose its power, the eye which would not take oversight of the flock will lose its light (*vv. 15—17*).

### 1—3. THE VISITATION OF THE LAND.

1. *Open thy doors, O Lebanon*] By Heb. idiom the imperative is sometimes used (where a future tense would be used in English) to give vivid form to an announcement of the Divine will; cp. Gen. xii. 2 (R.V.). It may be paraphrased, "Thou shalt open thy doors, O Lebanon," i.e. the invader shall enter Palestine unchecked by the mountain ranges of the north; cp. Isa. xiv. 8; xxxvii. 24.

*the fire*] A metaphor denoting the destructiveness of the invader. The enemy did in fact cut down the cedars of Lebanon as a prize of war. See *reft.* in preceding note.

2. *are spoiled*] Vulg. *vastati sunt*. A desert is made, where the forests had been.

*oaks of Bashan*] "The mountains of *Hauran* (Bashan) have many oak trees still, mostly *Quercus Coccifera*, *Q. Aegilops*, and *Q. Lusitanica*." (G. E. Post, *D.B.* s.v. *Oak*.)

*the strong forest*] Marg. *the defenced forest*. The mountain forests of Bashan seemed at first inaccessible to the enemy, but the invader (as Sennacherib boasts) penetrates into their recesses (Isa. xxxvii. 24).

3. *the shepherds*] Bashan consisted largely of pasture land: Jer. i. 19; Mic. vii. 14.

*the pride of Jordan*] A reference to "the green and shady banks, clothed with willows, tamarisks, and cane in which the lions made their covert" (Jer. xlix. 19, R.V.) (*B.D.B.*).

Jordan is spoiled. Thus said the LORD my God: Feed <sup>4</sup> the flock of slaughter; whose <sup>1</sup>possessors slay them, <sup>5</sup> and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich: and <sup>2</sup>their own shepherds pity them not. For I will no <sup>6</sup> more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them. So I fed the flock of slaughter, verily <sup>7</sup> <sup>3</sup>the poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *buyers*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *their shepherd pitieth*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *the most miserable of sheep*

#### 4—14. THE REJECTION OF THE DIVINELY APPOINTED SHEPHERD.

4. *Feed the flock*] The imperative singular expresses JEHOVAH's will that a shepherd be still found for Judah. LXX has the plural, ποιμαίνετε, "be ye shepherds to" (cp. John xxi. 16), as though the command were given to the false shepherds, but this is an improbable reading.

5. *whose possessors (buyers)...and they that sell them*] The allusion is to abuse of justice; the "buyers" are the oppressors who give bribes; "they that sell them" are the judges who accept the bribes.

*Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich*] Rather, **Blessed be the Lord, and may I become rich!** The speaker's religion is subordinated to his desire to make money.

*their own shepherds pity*] Better as marg., **their shepherd pitieth.** The reference is to the king of Judah of pre-Captivity days.

*pity*] The same Heb. word as in Mal. iii. 17 (*spare...spareth*). The English word *pity* (and even *spare*) is unfortunate in that it suggests *passivity*. But the *pity* of the shepherd is active; it results in the rescue of the sheep in danger, and when God *spar*es men on the Day of Judgement, he *delivers* them from death.

6. *I will no more pity*] Cp. Ezek. viii. 18. The situation supposed is that of Judah just before the Chaldean devastation of Jerusalem.

*I will deliver...his neighbour's hand*] Cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 17—19. *his king*] Cp. Jer. xxii. 13—17.

7. *the poor of the flock*] Better as marg., **the most miserable of sheep.**

*two staves*] The Eastern shepherd carries a *rod* (*shēbel*) or



the one I called <sup>1</sup>Beauty, and the other I called <sup>2</sup>Bands;  
 8 and I fed the flock. And I cut off the three shepherds  
 in one month; for my soul was weary of them, and their  
 9 soul also loathed me. Then said I, I will not feed you:  
 that that dieth, let it die; and <sup>3</sup>that that is to be cut  
 off, let it be cut off; and let them which are left eat  
 10 every one the flesh of another. And I took my staff  
 Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my  
 11 covenant which I had made with all the peoples. And  
 it was broken in that day: and <sup>4</sup>thus <sup>5</sup>the poor of the  
 flock that gave heed unto me knew that it was the  
 12 word of the LORD. And I said unto them, If ye think  
 good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear. So they

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Graciousness*      <sup>2</sup> Or, *Binders*      Or, *Union*      <sup>3</sup> Or, *that that is lost, let it be lost*  
<sup>4</sup> Or, *the poor of the flock...knew of a truth*      <sup>5</sup> Or, *the most miserable of sheep*

club for repelling wild beasts, and a crooked staff (*mish'eneth*) for helping the sheep and himself in difficult places; Ps. xxiii. 4.

*Beauty*] Heb. *nō'am*. See note on v. 10.

8. *I cut off*] The speaker is JEHOVAH Himself.

*the three shepherds*] That is, the three last kings of Judah.

*in one month*] A phrase meaning "a short time." It was in fact about eleven years, but viewed from the standpoint of *circ.* 500 B.C. it seemed a very short time.

9. *I will not feed you*] These words are to be reckoned as said to the remnant which escaped from the overthrow of Jerusalem. Cp. Jer. xlv. 27, "Behold, I watch over them for evil, and not for good."

*let them...eat every one the flesh of another*] That is, "let them turn to civil war"; cp. Isa. xlix. 26 (a reference to the internal struggles of the Babylonians after the death of Nebuchadrezzar). See the story of the fate of Gedaliah in Jer. xli.

10. *my staff Beauty*] This staff stands for all the institutions which JEHOVAH gave to Judah for its advantage—the kingdom, the priesthood, the Temple with its services, etc. All were "broken" in the fatal month during which the Chaldeans worked their will on Jerusalem.

*with all the peoples*] Heb. '*ammim* for "peoples," not *gōyim*, "nations, Gentiles." The reference is to the peoples of Israel and of Judah, i.e. to the different tribes. But proselytes from surrounding peoples may be included as in Isa. lxi. 7.

12. *give me my hire*] That is, as a shepherd, who is also a prophet.



weighed for my hire thirty *pieces* of silver. And the LORD said unto me, Cast it <sup>1</sup>unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them <sup>1</sup>unto the potter, in the house of the LORD. Then I cut asunder mine other <sup>14</sup>staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet again <sup>15</sup>the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will <sup>16</sup>raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not <sup>2</sup>visit those that be <sup>3</sup>cut off, neither shall seek <sup>4</sup>those that be scattered, nor heal that that is broken; neither

<sup>1</sup> The Syriac reads, *into the treasury*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *miss*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *lost*

<sup>4</sup> Or, *the young*

*thirty pieces of silver*] The value of a slave according to the earliest Heb. code (Exod. xxi. 32). Joseph was sold for twenty pieces (Gen. xxxvii. 28).

13. *unto the potter*] Thirty shekels is a hire sufficient for one of the lower handicraftsmen, not for a prophet. In Ecclus. xxxviii. 29 ff. the "potter" is included among those who "trust in their hands" and are not "sought for in the council of the people."

*in the house of the LORD*] The place made the protest the more solemn. Cp. Jer. xxviii. 5 (Jeremiah rebukes Hananiah); xxxv. 2 ff. (Jeremiah and the Rechabites).

14. *break the brotherhood*] The "breaking of the brotherhood" refers to some event of which we know little or nothing, *not* to the revolt of the ten tribes (1 Kings xii.).

#### 15—17. THE WORTHLESS SHEPHERD APPOINTED AS A PUNISHMENT.

15. *Take unto thee yet again*] A vision supplementary to that of vv. 4—14 now begins.

*the instruments*] That is, the equipment; the rod (or club), the staff, and the bag (or "scrip"; 1 Sam. xvii. 40).

16. *a shepherd...which shall not visit*] This description, like that of Ezek. xxxiv. 2—4, applies to more than one of the later Jewish kings, to Jehoiakim as well as to Zedekiah. Yet as a particular shepherd seems to be meant, the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, is probably intended.

*visit those that be cut off*] The expression is a brachylogy. The shepherd *visits* (or "musters") the sheep, and so *misses* (cp. margin) those that are lost.

*those that be scattered*] Heb. *han-na'ar*, "the young one,"

- shall he feed that which <sup>1</sup>is sound, but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and shall tear their hoofs in pieces.  
 17 Woe to the worthless shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *standeth*.

or (collectively) "the young ones"; so A.V. and marg. R.V. But the right reading may be *han-nin'ār*, "the one who is shaken out of the flock," i.e. separated from it; so LXX τὸ ἐσκορπισμένον, "the scattered one" (or collectively) "the scattered ones."

*shall tear their hoofs in pieces*] The meaning "hoofs" is doubtful; the Heb. word more probably means "pieces." Render, **shall tear their pieces**, i.e. "tear them in pieces."

17. *Woe to the worthless shepherd that leaveth the flock!*] The words are probably proverbial, a taunt raised by shepherds against an unworthy fellow-shepherd.

*his arm...his right eye*] He is punished in the arm which should help and protect the sheep, and in the eye which should watch over them. There *may* possibly be an allusion to the blinding of Zedekiah (Jer. lii. 11).

#### CH. XII. 1—9. THE CAPTURE AND DELIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM (cp. xiv. 1—15).

The two passages (xii. 1—9 and xiv. 1—15) are similar in character, and especially in this feature that they pass lightly over the capture of the city, and dwell at length on its deliverance and subsequent restoration. Though in both cases the fall of Jerusalem is referred to as future, it was in fact past, when these prophecies were delivered. The Prophet desires to teach that the tragedy of 586 B.C. happened by the Divine will, so he transposes himself in thought to the time before it happened, and announces it as a Divine judgement. The catastrophe is briefly described in a single verse in each passage (xii. 2; xiv. 2), and the Prophet hastens on to his own present, the present of his hearers. His interest is pastoral and practical; he wishes to reassure his people. His main message is that **JEHOVAH** who once showed Himself mighty to pull down and to punish is mighty also to build up and restore His people if they be penitent (xii. 10—14).

The contents of xii. 1—9 are very interesting. The announcement that Jerusalem is to be made a *shaken (trembling) threshold* means that the enemy will pass over the defences of the city and make their entry into it, as Nebuchadrezzar's army did in

The <sup>1</sup>burden of the word of the LORD concerning **12**  
Israel.

Thus saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: Behold, I will <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *oracle*

fact. This, the affliction of Jerusalem, will be, the Prophet adds, the affliction of Judah also. But when the Gentiles begin to make use of their victory, they suffer disappointment. Jerusalem proves to be a "burdensome stone," like one of those huge building-stones used in ancient Eastern architecture which must often have injured the men who handled them or moved them. The chieftains of Judah join hands with the inhabitants of Jerusalem (to whom strength of war is Divinely given); Jerusalem is delivered and restored, while the Gentiles suffer heavy losses. There is of course a great foreshortening of the story in this passage, half narrative, half prophecy as it is. The Prophet passes without a word over the period of the Captivity to come to his own time. Like Zechariah himself in the vision of the Four Carpenters (i. 18—21) he sets himself to comfort his contemporaries by proclaiming the failure of the designs of their enemies. The imagery with which the assurance is clothed must not be interpreted literally. The gathering of "all nations" with their war horses, the blinding of these horses, and the great slaughter of the Gentiles by the "chieftains" of Judah are simply figures used to convey the promise of JEHOVAH'S continued protection of Jerusalem and her daughter cities.

1. *concerning Israel*] "Israel" is used here as a religious term equivalent to Dean Stanley's phrase, "The Jewish Church." It stands for Judah and Jerusalem and for whatever fragments of the northern tribes desired communion with the Jews and were admitted to worship on Mount Zion. Cp. ix. 1. In other places (viii. 13; xi. 14) "Israel" is used in a political sense as equivalent to "the house of Joseph" (x. 6) or "Ephraim" (ix. 10), i.e. it means the "ten tribes" of the northern kingdom.

*stretcheth forth the heavens*] The vault of heaven is sometimes spoken of in O.T. as though it were a curtain (Ps. civ. 2), sometimes as though it were a metal dome, a "firmament" (Gen. i. 6; Heb. *rāḳī'a*, "metal beaten thin into a plate").

*formeth the spirit of man*] Better, **fashioneth**, as in Ps. xxxiii. 15. The Heb. verb rendered "form" or "fashion" (*yāṣar*) which is often used of the work of a potter is no doubt employed here intentionally. The word "spirit" (*rūah*) by itself might mean simply "breath" or "wind." But JEHOVAH in the making of man does more than breathe formless breath into his nostrils. He shapes for man a definite human spirit just as He prepares

make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and <sup>1</sup>upon Judah also <sup>2</sup>shall it be in the <sup>3</sup>siege against Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of <sup>4</sup>the earth shall be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with

<sup>1</sup> Or, *against*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *shall it fall to be*

for him a definite human body. To each individual a separate individual spirit is given; cp. Ps. xxxiii. 15, where the word "heart" is used for "spirit."

2. *a cup of reeling unto all the peoples*] Rather, **a quaking threshold for all the peoples.** LXX *πρόθυρα σαλευόμενα*, "a shaking vestibule." "Threshold" not "cup" is the common meaning of the Heb. *saph*. The situation supposed at the beginning of *v.* 2 is that Jerusalem is being afflicted by the enemy. But JEHOVAH delivers the city by means of an earthquake; cp. xiv. 4, 5. The enemy flees in terror from the "quaking threshold," of the city which they are afflicting. The rendering of E.V., *a cup* (rather **bowl**) of *reeling* (*trembling*) supposes that Jerusalem is the cup of God's wrath (cp. Isa. li. 22), conveying disaster to her foes, when they drink it. But nothing is said here about *drinking*, and the "bowl" (*saph*) was *not* a drinking vessel. The sense "bowl" is all but impossible in this context.

*and upon Judah...against Jerusalem*] Rather, **and upon Judah also shall there be affliction** (lit. *shall it be with affliction*) **because of Jerusalem.** Capital and country experience the same earthquake. Similarly van Hoonacker, *et pour Juda aussi il fera mauvais dans l'angoisse qui étreindra Jérusalem.*

3. *a burdensome stone*] The transport of huge stones, worked or unworked, by gangs of slaves, captives, or other impressed labourers was one of the great features of city building and city embellishment in the ancient East. For the labourers such toil must have meant grave bodily injuries and frequent deaths. Similarly a heavy toll will be taken from those who strive to "move" Mount Zion or to remove her population (xiv. 2).

*shall be sore wounded*] A.V. "shall be cut in pieces." The Heb. verb is found in Lev. xxi. 5 in the sense of making cuttings in the flesh as a sign of mourning. Perhaps we should render, "shall cut themselves in mourning," i.e. lament and be sorry for all that they attempted against Jerusalem; cp. *v.* 10.

4. *every horse*] The horses represent the dreaded element in the army which attacks Jerusalem; cp. x. 5.

astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a torch of fire among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in her own place,

*astonishment*] The word connotes helplessness, conflict of emotion resulting in inaction. Cp. Jer. xiv. 9, "Why, [O LORD,] shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save?". Dan. iv. 19 [16], "Then Daniel...was astonied for a while, and his thoughts troubled him."

*I will open mine eyes upon*] i.e. "I will show favour to." Cp. Gen. xliv. 21, "Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him" (LXX καὶ ἐπιμελοῦμαι αὐτοῦ, "and I will care for him").

5. *chieftains*] Cp. ix. 7 (same Heb. word).

*in their heart*] That is, not only with their lips, but with conviction.

*The inhabitants of Jerusalem*] For a century after the return from the Babylonian captivity, i.e. till at least as late as the days of Nehemiah, Jerusalem was in danger of becoming utterly forsaken. There was little or nothing to attract the population to a city set on a mountain, full of ruins, and badly supplied with water. Cp. Hag. i. 2, note. The great Jewish patriot, Nehemiah, took energetic measures to provide Jerusalem with inhabitants, for he saw the necessity for a fortified city as a rallying centre for Jewish nationality; Neh. vii. 1—4; xi. 1, 2. Probably earlier efforts had been made with a similar aim. If so we may understand that the Prophet is supporting the movement in this passage with the assurance of JEHOVAH's favour. Jerusalem, the empty shell of the city, was of no avail, but "the inhabitants of Jerusalem," men who "willingly offered themselves" (Neh. xi. 2) to dwell in the ancient city and make it a reality and power in the present were indeed a "strength" to the rest of the population of Judah.

6. *a pan of fire*] A small iron pot or basin used for carrying about a small charcoal fire, such as may be seen (e.g.) in Malta at the present day.

*dwell in her own place*] When an ancient city was destroyed, it was restored in one of two ways. *Either*, a new city was built near the site of the old, and the old name was given it. Thus

7 even in Jerusalem. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not 8 magnified above Judah. In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he <sup>1</sup>that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the 9 LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that

<sup>1</sup> Or, *that stumbleth*

G. A. Smith (*H.G.H.L.*, p. 267) writes concerning Jericho: "The present village occupies the site neither of the Old Testament nor of the New Testament Jericho. The former lay round 'Ain es-Sultan; the latter to the south of this, on the Wady Kelt." Or again the new city was built on the foundations of the old, so that the traces of the former destruction were concealed. So it was with Lachish (see F. J. Bliss, *A mound of many cities*) and so, the Prophet promises here, shall it be with Jerusalem.

7. *the tents of Judah*] A vivid phrase describing the country people of Judah, who however must be thought of not as nomads, but only as inhabiting villages and collections of huts which seemed as little permanent as tents when compared with the ancient city of Jerusalem.

*that the glory etc.*] There were parties among the Jews after the Return; not only a Davidic party using the name of Zerubabel and a priestly party using the name of Joshua the high priest, but also a city party labouring for the exaltation of Jerusalem, and a country party which feared the aggrandisement of the capital. It was inevitable that a strong fortified city which appeared to many as the land's defence against the foreigner should appear to others as a possible instrument of oppression against Jews who were not citizens.

8. *he that is feeble...shall be as David*] That is, the weakest shall **become** strong as David, the ancient champion of Israel; cp. Heb. xi. 34, "from weakness were made strong."

*as God*] LXX *ὡς οἶκος θεοῦ*, "as the house of God," avoiding the direct comparison as irreverent. But the Heb. phrase need not necessarily be understood in the highest sense: it is found in Gen. iii. 5, where R.V. marg. gives, "as gods." It is in fact a phrase which could be used by polytheists in reference to their gods or demi-gods. In the mouth of the Prophet it may be simply popular language drawn from the popular mythology with which the Jews could not help being acquainted.

*as the angel of the LORD before them*] Exod. xxiii. 23; xxxii. 34. The house of David shall *lead* them as with Divine leading.



day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the <sup>10</sup> house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto <sup>1</sup>me whom they have pierced: and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in

<sup>1</sup> According to some MSS., *him*.

9. *I will seek to destroy*] The phrase suggests *effort* and so has a strange sound when attributed to the Almighty. The Hebrew may however bear the sense, "I will make research as to destroying"; and so some Rabbinic commentators understand the words. Thus Rashi (*in loco*) writes, "*I will make research as to destroying them and I will make minute inquiry into their guilt*. And our Rabboth have interpreted the phrase of merit; *I will make research in the record of their deeds; if they have merit, I will let them alone, and if not, I will destroy them*."

In any case it is to be noted that the writer of Zech. xii.—xiv. does not use indiscriminate denunciation of the Gentiles. Punishment, he teaches, is to overtake two classes of the "nations," (1) those who once warred against Jerusalem: (2) those who after the manifestation of JEHOVAH's power still refuse to go up to Jerusalem to worship Him.

#### 10—14. THE REPENTANCE OF JUDAH.

10. *I will pour*] That is, "give in abundant measure."  
*the spirit of grace and of supplication*] The word *grace* looks back to v. 8, in which the promise is given that "he that is feeble shall become as David, and the house of David as God." The word *supplication* looks forward to the great act of repentance described in vv. 10—14. The two Heb. words for *grace* and *supplication* are related etymologically, both being derived from the same root.

*unto me whom they have pierced*] The pronoun "me" is certainly due to an error, and the true sense is given no doubt in the marginal reading "unto him" which is found in six Heb. MSS (so Ginsburg). But even with the ordinary text the same sense is obtained by reading the first word of the Hebrew with different vowels (*ēlē* for *ēlai*). The words "whom they pierced" are used here in place of the proper name of the person referred to. He is too well known to need further description and the suppression of his name gives solemnity to the passage. Probably he was one whom JEHOVAH gave to the restored Jewish community, but they rejected him and put him to death. It is just possible that Zerubbabel met with a fate like that of

11 bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there  
 be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of  
 12 Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the

Gedaliah (Jer. xli. 1, 2), and that he is the one "whom they pierced."

11. *the mourning* (Heb. *mispēd*) *of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon*] Is the reference to an historical event or to a religious custom? No decisive answer can be given. The words *in the valley of Megiddon* (*Megiddo*) recall the death of Josiah as described by the Chronicler, who further records that Jeremiah and the singers made "lamentations" (*ḥînōth*) for the fallen king (2 Chron. xxxv. 22, 25). In Kings however the place is stated simply as "at Megiddo" (2 Kings xxiii. 29), and if the reference be to Josiah no explanation can be given of *Hadadrimmon*.

On the other hand it is suggested that the reference is to a religious (Gentile) custom, for the practice of weeping for a god supposed to be deadly wounded was known to more than one ancient religion. The most familiar instance is the mourning for Adonis (Tammuz) referred to by Pseudo-Lucian, *de Syra dea*, vol. III. pp. 454—6 (ed. Reitz), and by Milton:

"Thammuz came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day;  
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock  
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood  
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded." (*P. L.* I. 446.)

The reference in the last lines is to a river called Adonis which rising in the Lebanon discharges itself into the sea near Byblus (Geba) in northern Phoenicia. Once a year this river takes a blood-red colour from the deposit which it brings down (Pseudo-Lucian). Byblus itself was the chief seat of the Adonis-rites.

We may probably conclude from Ezek. viii. 14 ("women weeping for Tammuz") that this corrupt worship was practised in Jerusalem before the Captivity. In the present passage the name *Hadadrimmon* offers considerable difficulty. *Hadad* (*Adad* in Assyrian) was the principal god of Syria, "le Baal par excellence, le Baal du ciel, et spécialement le dieu de l'orage" (Lagrange, *Religions Sémitiques*, 2<sup>ème</sup> ed., p. 93). As "storm god" he might be identified with the *Rammān* (Rimmon) of the Assyrians, so that *Hadadrimmon* would mean precisely "Hadad the storm god," but we have no reason for identifying the storm god with Adonis. Cheyne (*Encycl. Bib.*) proposes to read *Tammuz-Adon*, a very hardy emendation, but not impossible as an explanation, for other names and epithets of Gentile gods

land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their <sup>13</sup> wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every <sup>14</sup> family apart, and their wives apart.

have been purposely distorted in passages of the Biblical text (1 Kings xi. 5, note in *Camb. Bible*). The clause, *in the valley of Megiddon*, remains to be explained. *Megiddo* was one of the cities of the Great Plain which remained in the hands of the Canaanites after the Israelite Conquest (Jud. i. 27). It is therefore to be expected that heathen rites would still be celebrated there, and if mourning for Tammuz was practised in Byblus to the north and in Jerusalem to the south it may well have been the case in an intermediate heathen centre like Megiddo.

12. *the family of the house of David*] Four families are specified in this and the following verses, "David," "Nathan," "Levi," "the Shimeites." The general meaning of the Prophet's announcement is clear; the mourning is to include all classes, not excluding the royal house and the priestly clan, and including the *Harim*, the cloistered women. The royal tribe ("David") and the priestly ("Levi") are easily identified. The "Shimeites" stand perhaps for the small tribe of Simeon (Συμεών, LXX) which is not always named in enumerations of the twelve tribes. They dwelt in the south-west in Beer-sheba, Ziklag, and other cities (1 Chron. iv. 24—31). "Nathan" is an abbreviated form of some name such as Elnathan or Jonathan. If the full form were indeed "Jonathan," the "house of Nathan" may stand for Benjamin, for the head of the tribe at this time may have borne the name of Saul's great son.

*and their wives apart*] Periods of special solemnity were marked by a tabu on sexual intercourse, e.g. the three days which preceded the giving of the Law (Exod. xix. 15); and (it is asserted) any period of active military service.

#### CH. XIII. 1—6. A PROMISE OF THE CLEANSING OF JUDAH FROM UNCLEANNESS AND FROM THE TAIN OF HEATHENISM.

One result of the Exile was an increase in idolatrous practices among the Jews who remained in Judah. Having no king and being too weak to stand by themselves they "mingled themselves with the nations, and learned their works" (Ps. cvi. 35). Judah might have become a wholly heathen land, if different bands of exiles more zealous for JEHOVAH than their compatriots had

- 13 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for  
 2 sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause

not returned from captivity led by such men as Zerubbabel and Ezra to rebuild the Temple and re-establish the worship of the God of their fathers. The work of these returned exiles was the fulfilment of the promises given in *v.* 2.

1. *a fountain opened*] Though the Prophet promises that JEHOVAH will intervene on behalf of His people (*ix.* 8—17; *x.* 5; *xii.* 2 ff.), he insists on their sins, and regards them as doomed to heavy punishment. It is a remnant of a third only (*xiii.* 8) that shall be saved by submission to a severe process of cleansing.

*the house of David*] The royal house especially needed cleansing, for to it belonged the shepherds denounced in *chap.* xi., and the shepherd who had filled up the cup of Judah's guilt; see *vv.* 7—9. Next after the house of David the inhabitants of Jerusalem were especially guilty; *cp.* *Ezek.* viii. 3—18.

*for sin and for uncleanness*] Both words are used with special reference to *idolatry*; *cp.* *v.* 2. For "sin" see 1 Kings *xii.* 30; for "uncleanness" see *Ezek.* vii. 19, 20, R.V.

2. *the names*] *Cp.* *Hos.* ii. 17 [*19, Heb.*]. The word "name" connotes entirely different ideas in the East and in the West, for while in the West a name may be accidentally given and no significance be attached to it, in the East a name is always a matter of importance. Thus no Eastern could have written the lines:

"What's in a name? that which we call a rose  
 By any other name would smell as sweet."

(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act II. Sc. 2.)

Similarly no Western could have composed the verse: "Behold, the name of JEHOVAH cometh from afar, burning with his anger" (*Isa.* xxx. 27). The "name of JEHOVAH" means Himself in all His attributes of power, glory, omniscience. So too the name of the idol represents the idol as a power which exercises influence over its worshippers and induces them to pay it reverence and ascribe supernatural works to it. "To cut off the names of the idols" is to take away all their authority and all men's acknowledgment of them. Men will cease to invoke them. After they have thus lost "their names" it matters little whether the idols themselves are burned or thrown on the dust heap. The literal meaning of the Heb. word for *idols* used here seems to be "forms" or "shapes" carved with an instrument.

the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall<sup>3</sup> yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come<sup>4</sup> to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall<sup>5</sup> say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And<sup>6</sup> one shall say unto him, What are these wounds between thine<sup>1</sup> arms? Then he shall answer, Those

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *hands*.

*the prophets and the unclean spirit*] That is, the false prophets and the unclean spirit which inspires them. LXX τοὺς ψευδο-προφήτας, though the Heb. word is simply "prophets." Such persons are described in Mic. ii. 11; iii. 5. They were "false" because they did not speak of sin and of judgement to come, but flattered their hearers for the sake of popularity or gain: cp. Mic. iii. 8.

3. *his father and his mother*] So keenly is his guilt felt that both parents turn against him.

*shall thrust him through*] The same Heb. verb is translated "pierce" in xii. 10. There is no doubt as to the meaning, but LXX has softened the statement to συμποδιοῦσιν αὐτόν, "shall bind him."

4. *a hairy mantle*] One of the distinctive marks of a prophet. Elijah's "mantle" plays an important part in his career (1 Kings xix. 19; 2 Kings ii. 8, 13). That this mantle was of hair appears from 2 Kings i. 8 (cp. R.V. marg.). So John the Baptist is described as ἐνδεδυμένος τρίχας καμήλου (Mark i. 6).

5. *for I have been made a bondman from my youth*] More literally, "for a churl (a man of no distinction, Heb. *adam*) acquired me as a servant in my youth." The speaker means that he has never had that freedom from restraint which is one of the marks of a prophet. The tiller of a few acres has been his master—and a strict one.

6. *between thine arms*] The corresponding phrase in Arabic means "before thee, in thy presence." According to this analogy we may explain the question as, "What are these wounds *before thee*," i.e. the wounds in front which stand out so conspicuously.

with which I was wounded in the house of my<sup>1</sup> friends.

- 7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *lovers*

(A slave's scars should be on his back!) The "prophet" working in the fields stripped to the waist cannot help displaying the marks of the stabbing which he had received.

van Hoonacker and Marti give a different explanation of the verse, taking the *wounds* to mean the *cuttings* which heathen prophets inflicted on themselves or on one another, when they prophesied (1 Kings xviii. 28 ff.), which they afterwards displayed in attestation of their claim to be prophets; cp. 1 Kings xx. 35 ff. But the *wounds in front* of v. 6 seem rather to answer to the injuries of v. 3.

*my friends*] He is obliged to confess that no owner of a slave would inflict such injuries as these upon him.

#### 7—9. THE FALL OF ZEDEKIAH AND THE CHASTISEMENT OF JERUSALEM BY THE CHALDEANS TO BE TURNED TO GOOD FOR THE REMNANT.

7. *Awake, O sword*] The LORD's judgement on the last king of Judah is dramatically realized as though it were only now about to happen. Zechariah's interest is in the promise to his own contemporaries of purification and re-establishment.

*my shepherd*] That is, the shepherd of my flock. The shepherd who is thus punished is the "worthless shepherd" of xi. 17, i.e. Zedekiah. Our Lord's use of this passage in Mark xiv. 27 does not stamp it as a Messianic prediction. All that our Lord does is to allude to the verse in order to illustrate his meaning and impress it vividly upon the mind of the Disciples. The passage affords a parallel to the Gospel history: the sword awakes *by Divine permission* against the leader; the followers are scattered. LXX. B has the plural, τοὺς ποιμένας μου, a reading which involves the difference of one vowel point only (rō'ai for rō'i).

*that is my fellow*] JEHOVAH as chief shepherd (cp. 1 Pet. v. 4) condescends to speak of the human shepherd as his associate. Another reading of the Heb. text is, "that is his fellow" (so the Petrograd codex of 916 A.D.; Targ.; LXX. A).

*smite*] 2 masc. sing. (addressed to the wielder of the sword); παράξον, LXX. A. But the text is uncertain: LXX. B has παράξαι, and Mark xiv. 27, παράξω. The smiting might be described as JEHOVAH's act, or as the act of His instrument, the Chaldeans.



and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Behold, a day of the LORD cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished: and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be

*I will turn mine hand]* Not in indiscriminate mercy, but yet for good; Isa. i. 25.

*the little ones]* Cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

8. *the third]* Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 2; Ezek. v. 2.

9. *through the fire]* American Standard Version, **into the fire.** The first step is an act of judgement.

*I will hear them,* Rather, **I will answer them.**

*The LORD is my God,* A renunciation of idolatry; cp. vv. 1, 2.

#### CH. XIV.

Here as in ch. xii. the prophet takes his mental standpoint in a past century before the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxv.). In vv. 1, 2 he describes the great overthrow as belonging to a Day of JEHOVAH, i.e. as a great act of Divine Judgement; he then passes on quickly to set forth the promise of a final deliverance of Jerusalem from the Gentiles, and its re-establishment as the City of JEHOVAH and a place of prayer for all nations. In all these hopes Zechariah the Disciple follows Zechariah the Prophet (Zech. viii. 1—5; 22, 23). See also the introductory note to chapter xii.

1. *a day of the LORD cometh]* This is the correct rendering of the Hebrew; not "*the day of the LORD,*" as A.V. Cp. Isa. ii. 12, "For there shall be a day of the LORD."

2. *I will gather]* The sufferings enumerated in this verse are not to be thought of as making a specially hard case. They were the usual fate of a conquered city. The description of the Chaldean invaders as "all nations" is suitable, since the foe was a great world-power.

*and (but) the residue of the people etc.]* These words are a promise which suddenly checks the tale of woe.

3 cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in 4 the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of

3. *go forth*] An anthropomorphic phrase; kings "go forth" to battle (2 Sam. xi. 1). Cp. Isa. xxvi. 21, "The LORD cometh forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth."

*as when he fought*] Rather, **as when he fighteth**. "JEHOVAH is a man of war" (Exod. xv. 3), yet he does not fight as men fight (cp. Isa. xxx. 30—32).

*in the day of battle*] Rather **in the day of drawing nigh**; cp. Mal. iii. 5. There is a happy ambiguity in the expression: a king "draws nigh" for battle, and also "draws nigh" for judgement.

4. *his feet shall stand*] His feet touch the mount of Olives and a great earthquake takes place (cp. v. 5).

*the mount of Olives*] Or, "hill of Olives." In 2 Sam. xv. 30 it is well called the "ascent of Olives," for it is in fact only another summit or cluster of summits of the rock-mass on which Jerusalem itself stands. The Temple mount is 2440 ft. above sea level, while the highest point of the mount of Olives is 2680 ft. The valley between them falls to about 2200 ft. As seen however from the neighbourhood of Jericho Olivet is a veritable "mountain." In its broadest sense the mount of Olives includes the mount of Corruption, *Jebel Batn el Hawa* (2 Kings xxiii. 13, note in *Camb. Bible*), to the south and mount Scopus to the north. It consists mainly of limestone. The slopes are cultivated, but the vegetation is not luxuriant. Cp. *Camb. Companion*, p. 424 f. and Maps 5 and 6. LXX translates the name by τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν, a designation which is found in the Synoptic Gospels, in [John] viii. 1, and in Josephus, e.g. *Bellum*, II. xiii. 5 = § 262 (τὸ Ἐλαιῶν καλούμενον ὄρος).

*shall cleave in the midst thereof*] Cp. v. 5, "And the valley of my mountains shall be stopped" (R.V. marg.). Zechariah predicts that at the coming of the LORD even the greatest features of the country shall change their aspect: "Mountains interposed" shall split asunder and yield a way; valleys which were once high-ways shall be blocked. Cp. Isa. xl. 3, 4, "Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the LORD....Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low." The splitting of the mount of Olives is to be understood as a preparing of the way of the LORD.

it toward the south. And <sup>1</sup>ye shall flee <sup>2</sup>by the valley <sup>5</sup>of <sup>3</sup>my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee. And it shall come to pass in that 6

<sup>1</sup> Or, as otherwise read, *the valley of my mountains shall be stopped*      <sup>2</sup> Or, *to*      <sup>3</sup> Or, *the*

5. *And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains*]. Better (cp. marg.), **And the valley of my mountains shall be stopped**; LXX καὶ φραχθήσεται ἡ φάραγξ ὁρέων μου. So also the Targum. The difference in the Heb. is only one of vowel points: *wēnastem* ("ye shall flee") and *wēnistam* ("shall be stopped") The latter reading is found in one MS and in the margin of two early printed editions. The "valley of my mountains" probably means the valley which separates the Temple mount from the mount of Olives, i.e. the valley of the Kidron; cp. 1 Kings xv. 13 with note in *Camb. Bible*. As the mountains are brought low at the presence of JEHOVAH, so the valleys are exalted. The way of the LORD shall be prepared as a level road neither struggling upwards over the mount of Olives, nor winding downwards to cross the Kidron valley.

*yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled*] LXX, καὶ ἐνφραχθήσεται καθὼς ἐνεφράγη. There is the same ambiguity in the Hebrew (apart from the points) as in the first clause of the verse. Probably we should again render, **yea, it shall be stopped, like as it was stopped.**

*before the earthquake*] Or, "because of the earthquake." LXX. BA ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ σεισμοῦ (reading *hīmē* instead of *mippēne*). The prophecy of Amos is dated "In the days of Uzziah king of Judah...two years before the earthquake" (Amos i. 1). For a later serious earthquake in 31 B.C. (under Herod the Great) see Josephus, *Arch.* xv. v. 2 = §§ 121, 122.

*the LORD my God*]. Cp. xi. 4.

*and all the holy ones with thee*] In A.V. "and" is in italic, and this is more correct, for the word is found in some (not all) MSS, and is more likely to be a scribe's addition than a scribe's omission. We may trace three steps in the story of the text of this passage. (1) The original reading, **All the holy ones be with thee!**—a quasi-benediction or ascription of praise used after the mention of the name JEHOVAH. (2) An easy emendation made by persons who failed to see that the words were an ascription, "all the holy ones with *him*"; so LXX, Peshitta, Targum, Vulg. and three Heb. MSS (Ginsburg: over 30 acc. to Kennicott). (3) The addition of the copula to both readings to

day, that <sup>1</sup>the light shall not be <sup>2</sup>with brightness and  
 7 with gloom: but it shall be one day which is known  
 unto the LORD; not day, and not night: but it shall  
 come to pass, that at evening time there shall be light.  
 8 And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters  
 shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the  
 eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea:  
 9 in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD  
 shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall the

<sup>1</sup> Another reading is, *there shall not be light, the bright ones shall contract themselves.* <sup>2</sup> According to some ancient versions, *but cold and frost.*

make them smoother. Wellhausen (hesitatingly), Marti, and Duhm follow the versions.

6. *the light shall not be with brightness and with gloom*] So the K'ri. Better as marg., **there shall not be light, the bright ones shall contract themselves**, (*...shall withdraw themselves*, American Standard Version). So the C'thib. The Prophet conceives a day of creative energy and his thoughts go back to the first story of Creation (cp. Gen. i.). Then God said, "Let there be light"; now for a short space chaos is to return and light, the first-born of the cosmos, will fail. Darkness partial or complete is sometimes the accompaniment of earthquakes.

7. *one day which is known unto the Lord*] The Prophet does not claim to know the day himself. Cp. Mark xiii. 32. *not day, and not night*] A time of half lights. *at evening time there shall be light*] Newly created light.

8. *living waters shall go out*] Owing to a fresh creative act. Jerusalem is one of the driest cities in the world; Zion in fact seems to mean a "dry place." No promise could be more welcome to Zion than that of living water. The statement that these waters shall flow eastward and westward conveys moreover a promise of fertility to the whole land. It is however improbable that this is the Prophet's whole meaning. He is one who speaks in figures, and since he declares in the next verse that "the name of JEHOVAH shall be one," he surely means his hearers to associate the thought of growth in spiritual knowledge with his promise of the flow of "living waters." Cp. Isa. xi. 9, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

*in summer*] In Jerusalem during the four months, June, July, August, September, no rain falls, and little or none during May (*P.E.F.* for 1913, pp. 102, 208).

9. *shall be king*] Lit. "shall become king." Targ. "And

LORD be one, and his name one. All the land shall be 10

the kingdom of JEHOVAH shall be revealed to all the inhabitants of the earth."

*shall...be one*] That is, one in the knowledge and worship of all his people.

*and his name one*] Many heathen gods were called by double names, thus Mesha of Moab speaks of his god as Ashtar-Chemosh (Moabite Stone, line 17), the Babylonians called their chief god Bēl-Marduk (in Hebrew, Bel-Merodach; cp. Jer. 1. 2), the Egyptians of the New Kingdom called theirs Amon-Rē. These double names bear upon them the mark of Polytheism, for they express the effort to conceive a god who is greater than the rest, because he combines the attributes of another god with his own. Thus Amon the god of the great Egyptian city of Thebes in course of time was declared to be the same as Rē the Sun-god, and so Amon-Rē, god of southern Egypt and *also* a great Nature-god attained to the chief place in the Egyptian Pantheon.

The God of Israel also bears a double name (JEHOVAH Zēbāōth) in parts of the O.T., especially in the prophetic writings, including Zech. ix.—xiv. (see Isa. i. 9, etc.; Zech. i. 3, 4; xiii. 7). This name is better left untranslated, and in any case it is wrong to represent it as in the English Version by "The LORD of hosts," for the second element of the double name is in apposition with the first. The compound name JEHOVAH Zēbāōth, "JEHOVAH-Hosts," is used by the Prophets to teach the truth that all the attributes and powers which the heathen ascribed to "Heaven" belonged to JEHOVAH the God of Israel. But the name Zēbāōth ("Hosts") being plural accommodates itself easily to polytheistic ideas. This no doubt is the reason why it is not used in many parts of the O.T., and specially not in the Pentateuch.

The present passage (Zech. xiii. 7—xiv. 11) shows a progress from the use of the compound name (JEHOVAH Zēbāōth, xiii. 7) to the use of the single name JEHOVAH (xiii. 8; 9 *q.v.*; xiv. 1; 3; 5 *q.v.*; 7; 9), which marks an advance in clearness of prophetic teaching as to the Unity of God. This clearer instruction proved itself practically effective. It impressed heathen nations and brought in many proselytes to Judaism in Judaea and in other Eastern lands in the pre-Christian centuries; Isa. xiv. 1; lvi. 3—8; Esth. viii. 17; cp. E. Schürer, *Geschichte J. V.* III. 164—172 (4te Aufl.), who states that the success of proselytizing efforts was considerable. An early passage of the Sibylline Oracles (middle of the second century B.C.) evidently assumes that the Jews were making many proselytes: οἱ πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι βίον καθοδηγοὶ ἔσονται "who shall be guides of life to all mortals" (*Sib.* III. 195).

10. *All the land shall be turned*] Rather, **He shall encompass the whole land**, i.e. JEHOVAH shall go round the whole land

turned as the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of

as its protector; cp. ii. 5; xii. 7, 8. This is the interpretation of LXX. The rendering of the English Version (A.V., R.V.) is supported by Jewish authority (Rashi, Kimkhū), but it presupposes an unusual grammatical construction in the Hebrew. It is moreover obscurely expressed, for the same interpretation is more plainly given in the American Standard Version, "All the land shall be made like the Arabah," i.e. like the low-lying valley through which the Jordan flows. Rashi writes, "The whole earth shall be changed to become like the Arabah, the mountains shall be brought low and all the world shall become flat, and Jerusalem shall be a mountain, so that it can be seen high above everything." So Isa. ii. 2 (= Mic. iv. 1) is understood in E. V. (text *not* marg.) to signify a *physical* exaltation of Jerusalem over the earth. It is however more probable that Isa. ii. 2 refers only to the spiritual pre-eminence to which Zion was destined.

*as the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem]* Rather, **as the Arabah, so shall he encompass the land from Geba to Rimmon, and the land south of Jerusalem.** Three different parts of the land of the returned exiles are mentioned here: (1) the *Arābāh*, the flat Jordan valley on the east in which Jericho was situated (2 Kings xxv. 4, 5); (2) the Benjamite territory on the north of Jerusalem (1 Sam. xiii. 16, R.V. and Jud. xx. 45, 47); (3) the south-land, or Negeb, of Jerusalem, i.e. Judah or the part of it still held by the Jews. These three districts made up the whole of the land still occupied by the Jews. JEHOVAH's passage through the Arabah is implicitly stated in vv. 3, 4, which describe Him as arriving on the east of Jerusalem. But the Prophet goes on to say that the LORD's care will be extended equally to the territory on the north of the city and to that on the south, in short to "all the land." The language is anthropomorphic but it agrees with the representation of i. 8 ff. and vi. 1—8. The Angel of JEHOVAH rides through the land or despatches his chariots to go about it.

*and she shall be lifted up]* i.e. Jerusalem. This exaltation is physical in as far as it implies a rebuilding of the city and its walls, but it is to be understood chiefly of a spiritual restoration. Cp. Isa. lii. 1, 2.

*from Benjamin's gate etc.]* Not one of the four (or five) places mentioned in this half verse can be identified with certainty, but the general meaning of the passage is plain. We remember *first* the tendency of Hebrew writers to begin topographical descriptions with the *east* side; cp. Num. ii. 3; Ezek. xlii. 16—19; Rev. xxi. 13. The gate of Benjamin (Jer. xxxvii. 13;



the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king's winepresses. And men <sup>11</sup> shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more <sup>1</sup>curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely. And this shall be <sup>12</sup> the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall

<sup>1</sup> Or, *ban*

xxxviii. 7) was therefore, we assume, on the east, but (since its name suggests that it led to Benjamin) it stood no doubt towards the north end of the east wall of the city. (It thus corresponds in general situation with the modern St Stephen's Gate, whence a road bends northwards into the old territory of Benjamin). If we assign the *corner gate* a site to the west or south-west, we have the support of 2 Kings xiv. 13 which seems to say that Joash made a breach in the north wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim (eastern limit) to the corner gate (western limit). We conclude therefore that the phrase "from Benjamin's gate...unto the corner gate" means "from east to west."

Further the words "unto the corner gate" seem to be an explanation of the preceding words, "unto the place (site) of the first gate." The "first gate" may be another name for the "corner gate."

*from the tower of Hananel unto the king's winepresses*] This phrase probably means "from the northern limit of the city to the southern." The tower of Hananel (Neh. iii. 1; Jer. xxxi. 38) was apparently on the north-east. The royal domain on the other hand, of which the king's winepresses were part, was certainly on the south side of Jerusalem.

11. *And men shall dwell therein*] The Prophet seems (like Nehemiah) to be facing the difficulty of peopling the city; Neh. vii. 4; xi. 1, 2.

*there shall be no more curse* (marg. *ban*)] Before these words were spoken Jerusalem had seemed to be under the *ban* as a city devoted by JEHOVAH to desolation; cp. 1 Kings ix. 8, 9. So the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse is distinguished from the old, by the fact that *there shall be no curse* (κατάθεμα) *any more* (Rev. xxii. 3).

*safely*] i.e. with a sense of security; LXX πεποιθώς.

12. *the plague*] The Heb. *maggēphah* is a general term and means a "blow" or "calamity," whether a defeat in battle (1 Sam. iv. 17, "a slaughter"), or (as here) a pestilence.

*that have warred*] Rather, **that have assembled**, i.e. to make war. The plague is not a punishment, but the means by which JEHOVAH will free Jerusalem from the hitherto victorious foe.

- consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and  
 13 their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great <sup>1</sup>tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.  
 14 And Judah also shall fight <sup>2</sup>against Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered

<sup>1</sup> Or, *discomfiture*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *at*

*while they stand upon their feet*] The phrase marks the suddenness with which the pestilence attacks its victims. Thucydides says that at Athens the plague [of 430 B.C.] attacked persons in full health "without apparent cause, suddenly" (Thuc. II. 49, *init.*). Manson (*Trop. Diseases*, 156, quoted in *D.B.* III. 324 *b*) writes: "In highly malignant epidemics the disease may show itself within three or four hours of exposure to infection."

*their eyes shall consume away*] Thucydides says that some plague-victims escaped with their lives, but with the loss of their fingers and toes (*ἀκρας χείρας καὶ πόδας*) or of their eyes (Thuc. II. 49, *fin.*).

13, 14. *And it shall come to pass*] These two verses state the *means* by which JEHOVAH will effect the deliverance of Jerusalem. On the one hand the foe will be seized with confusion, and on the other Judah, no longer alienated, will come to the help of the capital.

13. *tumult*] Or, "confusion." The Heb. word (*mēhūmah*) is used in 1 Sam. xiv. 20, where a similar scene is portrayed, the enemy turning their swords against one another. The result of this confusion is "discomfiture" (cp. marg.).

*and they shall lay hold*] i.e. as if to slay.

14. *And Judah also shall fight*] JEHOVAH fights against the enemy with the sword of the pestilence, but Judah also must play her part in the deliverance of Jerusalem. The old rivalry between Judah and Jerusalem (xii. 5—7) is to be done away.

*against Jerusalem*] Better (as marg. and A.V.), **at Jerusalem**, or better still "in the matter of," "for the sake of Jerusalem." The Heb. phrase is different from that used in v. 12, where the sense is undoubtedly "against Jerusalem." Cp. xii. 5, 6.

*shall be gathered together*] i.e. shall be collected as spoil by Judah; cp. Isa. xxxiii. 4.

together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the <sup>15</sup> mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as this plague. And it <sup>16</sup> shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it <sup>17</sup>

*apparel*] Heb. *bēgādīm*, "garments." It is a word of quite general signification; it designates a priest's vestments (iii. 3), or ordinary wearing apparel (Isa. xxxvi. 22). But rich clothes form an important part of the wealth of the East, and so are often mentioned in any list of spoil; Jud. v. 30; 2 Kings vii. 15.

15. *the plague of the horse etc.*] Thucydides mentions that at Athens birds and quadrupeds who touched the unburied corpses of the plague-victims perished themselves (Thuc. ii. 50). (This *v.* breaks the connexion between *vv.* 14 and 16, but it does not follow that it is interpolated. The style of this whole chapter is somewhat disconnected. Wellhausen's suggestion that *vv.* 13, 14 belong to chap. xii. does not help much.)

16. *from year to year*] The exact Heb. phrase is found in I Sam. vii. 16.

*the King*] Heb. *Melech* (cp. *Molech*, *Milcom*; I Kings xi. 5 with note in *Camb. Bible*). There is here an accommodation to heathen speech, because it is heathen activity that is described. The Ammonites and other neighbours of Israel were accustomed to give the title of "the King" (*Melech* or *Molech*) to a deity who was propitiated with human sacrifices. This deity, whose "proper name" is not mentioned (no doubt through superstitious dread) is to be identified with the God of War and Pestilence. In the present passage the heathen being confounded by their overthrow before Jerusalem proceed to confess the power of JEHOVAH the God of Israel by giving him the title (*Melech*) which they were accustomed to give to the Destroying Deity. The unusual title "the King" is given to JEHOVAH in Isa. vi. 5 but the unusual circumstances of the incident described explain the case.

*to keep the feast of tabernacles*] "Feast of tabernacles" is a Latin name (Vulgate, *tabernaculorum*) for the "feast of booths" (Heb. *succōth*). The feast derives its name not from "tents" or "tabernacles," but from "booths," mere temporary shelters made of branches of trees and erected in the open field to keep men and cattle from the weather and especially from the sun (Gen. xxxiii. 17; Jonah iv. 5). It is reckoned as the third in the order of time of the three Harvest Feasts and as marking the

shall be, that whoso of *all* the families of the earth goeth not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the

end of the agricultural year (Exod. xxiii. 15, 16). In the ancient Book of the Covenant (Exod. xx. 23—xxiii. 33) it appears under the name of the feast of Ingathering simply. In Deut. xvi. 13—17 it is definitely called the feast of Booths, and provision is made that it be open to all ("thy manservant and thy maidservant, ... the stranger"). In Lev. xxiii. 33—43 however the representation is different both from Exod. xxiii. and from Deut. xvi. The Leviticus passage is believed to be of double origin; part is assigned to the Law of Holiness (cp. Driver *L.O.T.*, p. 54, ed. ix), part to the Priestly Code. Here the feast of Booths is connected with Israel's sojourn in the Wilderness, participation in the feast is restricted to Israelites, and moreover *to dwell in booths* is enjoined as an important element in the celebration.

Thus a progress (or a transformation) of the feast appears when we compare Exod. xxiii. and Deut. xvi. on the one hand with Lev. xxiii. on the other. *First*, with regard to the meaning of the feast. In Exod. xxiii.; Deut. xvi. there is no hint of any connexion with the Exodus from Egypt. The name ("of Booths") in Deut. does not suggest any idea beyond that of the harvest, at which time booths were no doubt used by the labourers for a brief rest during the heat of the day. But in Lev. xxiii. additional significance is given to the name. The booths are to be a reminder of Israel's use of *booths* (of *tents* rather) during the sojourn in the Wilderness, and the feast is to be kept only (so it seems) by genuine Israelites, "all that are homeborn in Israel shall dwell in booths" (Lev. xxiii. 42). The universal character of the feast as a celebration of the harvest has all but become lost. *Secondly*, with regard to the method of keeping the feast. The stress in Exod. and Deut. is on "appearing before ЈЕХОВАН" with an offering: in Leviticus the stress is rather on the symbolic dwellings in booths. The connexion of the feast of Tabernacles with the harvest is all but broken.

In Neh. viii. 14—18 is given an account of the keeping of the feast in the days of Ezra. It corresponds closely with the prescriptions of Leviticus. No allusion is made to the harvest, but it is said that the people kept Tabernacles in Jerusalem by dwelling in booths which they erected on the roofs of their houses, in the Temple courts, and generally wherever they could find room.

In this passage of Zechariah on the contrary no allusion is made to dwelling in booths; three times the simple phrase, "to keep the feast of Booths" is used without variation (*vv.* 16, 18, 19). This phrase, as we have seen, means simply to keep the final harvest feast of the year; cp. Exod. xxiii. 16; Deut. xvi. 13. That the Prophet should look forward to the

LORD of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And 18 if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, <sup>1</sup>neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague, where-with the LORD will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the 19 <sup>2</sup>punishment of Egypt, and the <sup>2</sup>punishment of all the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *shall there not be upon them the plague &c.*? The text is probably corrupt. The Sept. and Syr. have, *upon them shall be the plague &c.* <sup>2</sup> Or, *sin*

Gentiles keeping such a feast we can well understand, for it was universal in character. On the other hand it is most unlikely that the Prophet expected that the Gentiles, who had not taken part in the Exodus nor in the Wandering, should adopt the specially Israelite form of the feast, and dwell in booths as a ceremonial act. Zechariah looks forward rather to the Gentiles giving thanks for the universal boon of the harvest by going up to Jerusalem and there paying their worship and their tithes to JEHOVAH and not to the Baalim (cp. Hosea ii. 5, 12, 13).

17. *upon them there shall be no rain*] The feast of Booths takes place in the seventh month, *Tishri*, corresponding with September—October. In Palestine the rains are expected to begin in the following month, *Marḥeshvān*, or at least in the ninth month, *Chislew*. The coming of the punishment would therefore be manifested very soon after the neglect of the Prophet's warning. Cp. Hag. ii. 19, note.

18. *neither shall it be upon them; there shall be*] It is doubtful if the text is correct. If we assume that one word (*vēlō*) has been wrongly repeated from the preceding clause, we get the text which lies behind the LXX rendering, which is simply, *καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺτους ἔσται ἡ πῶσις* (cp. margin R.V.). Egypt is not threatened with a withholding of rain, for the rainfall of Egypt, except along the Mediterranean coast, is negligible in quantity under ordinary circumstances, and the fertility of the land depends entirely on the inundation of the Nile. This fact was noted by the ancients; cp. Deut. xi. 10, 11. So Tibullus (I. 25, addressing the Nile) writes: "Te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres." The rendering of A.V. ("*that have no rain*") though true to fact, is impossible philologically. Egypt is singled out chiefly no doubt because she ascribed her fertility to the Nile, and so paid divine honours to the river, but also because she might think that a threat of withholding rain did not apply to her. She is threatened (like the other families of the earth) with the plague of drought, but in her case the drought comes through the failure of the inundation of the Nile.

19. *punishment*] Marg. *sin*. For a similar ambiguity in the

nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.  
 20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses,  
 HOLY UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house  
 21 shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot  
 in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto the LORD  
 of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take  
 of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall  
 be no more a <sup>1</sup>Canaanite in the house of the LORD of  
 hosts.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *trafficker*

meaning of a Heb. word cp. Gen. iv. 13 (text, *My punishment*; marg. *My iniquity*).

20. *upon the bells*] LXX ἐπὶ τὸν χαλινόν, "upon the bridle." So also Pesh. The word is ἅπαξ λεγόμενον. A good paraphrase would be, "upon the jingling harness."

HOLY UNTO THE LORD] Or, HOLINESS UNTO JEHOVAH. The same phrase occurs in Jer. ii. 3 to express the dedication of Israel to JEHOVAH. As an inscription it was engraved on the golden plate of the high priest's mitre. Here it signifies the consecration even of the most unlikely objects to JEHOVAH. It implies (like ix. 10) the abolition of war.

*pots*] Not a happy word; LXX λέβητες, i.e. caldrons, in which the flesh of the sacrificial victims was boiled, before it was eaten. It is probable that these would be treated as less holy than the *bowls* (*mizvākoth*) in which the blood was dashed against the altar; cp. 1 Kings vii. 45, note on *basons*.

21. *Yea, every pot in Jerusalem*] Jerusalem is to become really the Holy City, and Judah really the Holy Land, therefore all things that are found within its borders, even the *pots* ("caldrons"), are to become holy too, fit for the service of the sanctuary.

*and seethe therein*] American Standard Version, *and boil therein*. The English R.V. retains the older word, as in Gen. xxv. 29, "Jacob sod (Amer. *boiled*) pottage"; Exod. xii. 9, "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden (Amer. *boiled*) at all with water"; 1 Sam. ii. 13, "While the flesh was in seething" (Amer. *was boiling*). The sacrificial victim (other than the Paschal Lamb) was boiled when it was to be eaten by the worshippers.

*a Canaanite*] Margin, "a trafficker." These two renderings are not necessarily contradictory, but they may be looked upon as giving (in the text) the literal rendering, and (in the margin) the underlying meaning. The "Canaanites," i.e. the peoples living along the sea coast of Palestine from Zidon in the north to Gaza in the south, were in fact traffickers; cp. Hosea xii. 7. The rendering "Canaanite" is given by LXX, Pesh., and



“trafficker” by Targ., Vulg., and Aquila. No doubt buying and selling (with their attendant evils) took place in the Temple in the days of “Zechariah” as well as in the days of our Lord (Mark xi. 15; John ii. 14). But it is improbable that the Prophet means *only* traffickers without any reference to foreign origin. One of the great efforts of the Jews in the post-exilic (Persian) period was to separate themselves from foreigners (Ezra ii. 62 f.; Neh. xiii. 1—3).

IN THAT DAY SHALL THE LORD BE ONE,  
AND HIS NAME ONE.

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GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT:—

A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.

DEAN OF ELY

MALACHI



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# MALACHI

With Notes and Introduction

by

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Cambridge:  
at the University Press

1917



# PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.



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## INTRODUCTION TO MALACHI.

### § 1. NAME OF THE BOOK.

The book is best described as anonymous. *Malachi* is simply the Hebrew equivalent of "my messenger," and if we make it a proper name, we ought in consistency to translate iii. 1. "Behold, I send *Malachi*." The word in fact has not the form of a proper name. The LXX read *Malacho* "His messenger" in i. 1 (*ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ*). *Μαλαχίας* (i.e. Malachiah, "messenger of JEHOVAH"), the title prefixed to the book in the LXX, has the true form of a proper name, but it is plainly due to a later hand and not to the original translator. *Malachias* is the title also in the Vulgate. It can hardly be doubted that the "name" *Malachi* is taken from iii. 1, and that the book was first so called because the word "messenger" stands out so conspicuously in the prophecy.

The position of the book in the O.T. is always that of the last of the Minor Prophets. Cp. Introduction to Haggai and Zechariah, § 1.

### § 2. CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI.

The book opens with startling abruptness. The prophet is a *messenger*!

i. 1. The Superscription of the book, which is left anonymous (cp. R.V. margin, and note *in loco*).

2—5. A message of comfort to Israel. Edom will not be able to recover from the disaster which has recently overtaken him.

6—14. A remonstrance with the PEOPLE because they offer defective offerings at the table of JEHOVAH. The



Gentiles reverence JEHOVAH'S name while His own people are guilty of profanity.

ii. 1—9. Arraignment of the PRIESTS for their unfaithfulness in teaching the requirements of the Law. Of old the decisions were given without favour, as though the priest were the Angel of JEHOVAH Himself, but now they are given with partiality.

10—16. Arraignment of the PEOPLE for contracting marriages with foreign women. A further evil was the divorce of native wives in favour of foreigners.

17—iii. 6. Rebuke of those who complain that JEHOVAH does not execute judgement. The LORD will come suddenly; and who will dare to face his fiery purification of his people? Because of the covenant, because JEHOVAH does not change, He will surely come with judgement.

7—12. Rebuke of the people because they withhold part of the tithe and heave offering. An offer of great blessing, if they will amend their fault.

13—iv. 3. A further rebuke (cp. ii. 17—iii. 6) of those who complain that JEHOVAH makes no difference between those who serve Him and those who do not. A day of judgement on the wicked and of healing for the righteous is coming.

4—6. The Colophon announcing the mission of Elijah.

### § 3. DATE OF MALACHI: CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS TEACHING.

The amount of positive evidence for fixing the date of the book of Malachi is very small. The book is anonymous, and the few proper names which are found in it tell us very little; only the most general conclusions can be drawn from the mention of Jacob and Esau (Edom), Levi and Judah, Moses and Elijah. The only external event alluded to is a judgement on Edom, of the circumstances of which nothing is known<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps the reference to the

<sup>1</sup> The reference may be to some event of the Chaldean period, but most commentators believe rather that Malachi refers to an invasion of

“governor” of Judah (*pehāh* or *paḥath*), as in Hag. i. 1; Neh. v. 14, is an indication that the book belongs to the Persian period (538—331 B.C.). This rough date may be narrowed down by giving due weight to the reference of Malachi to the prevalence among the Jews of marriages with foreign women, and to the prophet’s denunciation of such unions.

The great struggle of Jewish history against foreign marriages was carried on by Ezra and Nehemiah in the fifth century B.C. In default of fuller evidence concerning the date of Malachi it seems most reasonable to connect the prophet’s activity with this great episode. But this is not to assert that his work was exactly contemporaneous with either that of Ezra or that of Nehemiah. Some authorities (e.g. van Hoonacker) would put Malachi earlier, and others later, than these two great men. As however van Hoonacker places the activity of Ezra *after* the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem, he is able to conclude that Malachi “exerça son ministère probablement vers 450—445 [B.C.].”

Another indication of the period at which the prophecy was delivered is perhaps to be found in Mal. i. 6—14. The passage contains a complaint which is rare in prophetic writings. Sometimes the prophets complain that the people put their trust in sacrifice and neglect righteousness and mercy (Isa. i. 11; Hos. vi. 6; Amos v. 21—24); at other times they reproach them with their worship of other gods. But the complaint that Israel is niggardly, contemptuous and careless in the performance of the Temple

the Nabataeans (Nabathaeans). These were an Arabian tribe well-known in the later Greek and in Roman times (1 Macc. v. 25; ix. 35; Tacitus, *Ann.* ii. 57). There is evidence (Diodorus, xix. 94 ff.) that the Nabataeans were established at Petra before 312 B.C., when Antigonos sent his son Demetrius against them. Now *if* this Petra—situated half-way between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the head of the gulf of Akaba—be the *Sela* of 2 Kings xiv. 7 (but see note in *Camb. Bible*), and further *if* this Sela (Petra) was indeed the chief city of Edom, we may conclude that the Nabataeans overthrew the Edomite power in the fifth or fourth century B.C., and that Malachi’s allusion is perhaps to this Nabataean conquest. (The prophecy of Obadiah may also refer to this.) The scanty evidence allows no more definite statement than this.

worship is rare in the mouth of a Prophet. But it is within our knowledge that such a complaint would be suitable to the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, i.e. to the middle (or to the second half) of the fifth century B.C. Ezra, who desired to revive the Temple worship, had some difficulty in getting Levites and other Temple ministers to return with him from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra vii. 11—19; viii. 15—20). So again Nehemiah found it necessary to bind the people by a covenant not to forsake “the house of our God,” but to maintain its services duly with the necessary offerings of every kind (Neh. xiii. 10—13, 30, 31).

While these general indications point to the middle (or to the second half) of the fifth century B.C. as the date of Malachi, there is no indication on the other side to suggest a different period. “His diction betrays marks of lateness, though not so numerous or pronounced as Esther, Chronicles, and Ecclesiastes” (Driver, *L.O.T.* page 358, ninth edit.).

It was pointed out long ago by Ewald that Malachi introduced a new form of prophetic message. He does not confine himself to discourses introduced with the formula, *Thus saith* יהוה. More often he makes an accusing statement; waits for a word of defence; and then argues down the opponent (i. 2, 3; ii. 13, 14; iii. 7, 8, *al.*). Thus instead of the old public life in which the prophet met an audience of the whole people and addressed them as a spiritual statesman, something like the life of the Rabbinic debating school with its lessons on the smaller matters of the Law comes in. This does not mean that Malachi has no zeal for the weightier matters; the reverse is the case (Mal. iii. 5); but it does appear that his prophecy serves as a transition ground (as regards method) between prophetic teaching and the teaching of the Schools. His words “illustrate the development of prophecy *within* the Law. Not *under* the Law, be it observed. For if one thing be more clear than another about ‘Malachi’s’ teaching, it is that the spirit of prophecy is not yet crushed by the legalism which finally killed it within Israel<sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. ii. 348.

## § 4. THE TEACHING OF MALACHI.

Malachi comes forward to enforce the obligation of the Law of JEHOVAH, which his contemporaries were forgetting and neglecting. His references to the Law are numerous. Among the books of the Pentateuch it is, as we should expect, the book of Deuteronomy to which he refers. Deuteronomy has itself a prophetic character in the stress which it lays on the weightier matters of the Law, and its author looks forward to the rise of a future prophet (or series of prophets) to enforce its teachings in days to come (Deut. xviii. 15—22). So Malachi besides the plain and general reference to Deuteronomy in iv. 4 (cp. Deut. v. 1, 2) has several particular allusions to the book: e.g. i. 8 (cp. Deut. xv. 21); ii. 16 (Deut. xxi. 15 ff.); iii. 3 ("sons of Levi" = priests; also ii. 1—8; cp. Deut. xvii. 9, *al.*).

Besides teaching the continued obligation of the Mosaic Law Malachi presents in a somewhat new form the doctrine of the Day (of the judgement) of JEHOVAH. This doctrine is found in the earliest of the prophetic writings, the book of Amos (Amos v. 18—20), but it is presented by Malachi in a more definite form with some fresh details. JEHOVAH, he teaches, will come to His Temple to execute His office as judge there, in the centre of the religious life of His people (iii. 1—6). This representation agrees with Isaiah's primary vision of JEHOVAH on His throne *with His train filling the Temple* pronouncing the sentence of desolation on the land of Judah (Isa. vi. 1—13). But Malachi is more explicit on some points than his predecessor. He teaches that the judgement falls especially on the "Sons of Levi," i.e. the priests: they will be purified by a fiery trial; and after this those who survive to offer sacrifice will offer in righteousness. There will be furthermore a revealing of all offences against the moral Law—sorcery, adultery, perjury, and oppression are specially named—and judgement will come upon those who are guilty of them. The wicked will be burnt up "root and branch," a man's household will share his fate, as stubble is consumed in an oven (iv. 1).

The picture which Malachi draws of the day of judgement, his burning denunciation of divorce, and his general appeal to the book of Deuteronomy are enough to show that he is like one of the old prophets in zeal for the moral law. Though he is very zealous for the due performance of the Temple service (i. 6—14) he is no formalist; sacrifice is in his eyes only a means of expressing dutifulness; the thing which he truly desires is that the reverence due to JEHOVAH as the Father and Master of Israel should be fully accorded to Him (ii. 5; iii. 10). JEHOVAH is full of loving-kindness (iii. 10—12), but His due of reverence must be paid (i. 6).

The judgement described by Malachi embraces the chosen people only; nothing is said of the judgement of the Gentiles. On the contrary several commentators (e.g. G. A. Smith<sup>1</sup>) suppose that Malachi contrasts the Gentiles with the Jews to the disadvantage of the latter. Their proof passage is Mal. i. 11, 12. Unfortunately the meaning of the words is not quite certain. Ch. i. 12 plainly accuses the Jews of profaning the table (altar) of JEHOVAH, but in v. 11 the statement regarding the Gentiles is differently interpreted by different authorities. According to A.V., R.V. margin, and the American Standard Version "a pure offering *shall be* offered" among the Gentiles to JEHOVAH; according to R.V. text "a pure offering *is* (already) being offered." This second interpretation represents Malachi as acknowledging the existence of a pure worship of the true God among the Heathen; they worshipped (it seems) the One God of the Hebrews, only under another name. If Dr Smith is right Malachi approaches the standpoint of Pope's Universal Hymn:

"Father of all, in every age,  
In every clime adored,  
By Saint, by Savage, and by Sage,  
JEHOVAH, Jove, and Lord!"

But this interpretation of the passage is rejected by van Hoonacker (*in loco*), and by Kirkpatrick (*Doctrine of the*

<sup>1</sup> In an interesting passage, *The Twelve Prophets*, vol. ii. 358—360.

*Prophets*, 509, note) and cannot be right. See also the note in this book, pages 5, 6.

Finally we find in Malachi a striking idea which has influenced both Jewish and Christian theology. JEHOVAH will come to judge His people with a fiery judgement, but He will not come without warning. The sending of the Flood was preceded by the preaching of Noah, the coming of the judgement of fire will be heralded by the work of Elijah the prophet (iv. 5). Elijah will turn the hearts of old and young to repentance. The nature of his mission was keenly debated by the Jews in the second and third centuries A.D., as the Mishnah (*‘Edüyoth* viii. 7) shows. The Rabbis connect it with the Coming of Messiah (cp. Justin M., *Dial.* § 8, fin.) and with an authoritative interpretation and enforcement of the law (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, v. 126). Our Lord interpreted Malachi's prophecy of John the Baptist, his own forerunner (Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12, 13). The fact that John preached repentance and also the fact that he stood as the last champion of the old law show how suitable is this interpretation, which the Church received from the Master.

## § 5. HELPS TO THE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI.

For information about the Hebrew text and versions of Malachi the reader is referred to the Introduction to Haggai-Zechariah, § 8, page lii ff. The chief commentaries on the Minor Prophets are mentioned there. Here it is sufficient to say that Prof. van Hoonacker's *Petits Prophètes* (Paris, 1908) is full and good for Malachi as for the other Minor Prophets. George Adam Smith has given a spirited interpretation in vol. ii. of *The Twelve Prophets* (London, 1898, and later editions). Driver's notes in *The Minor Prophets* (vol. ii, Nahum—Malachi) contributed to "The Century Bible" are brief but good. The present Dean of Ely (Dr Kirkpatrick) has devoted chapter xvii. of his *Doctrine of the Prophets* to Malachi.

## § 6. ABBREVIATIONS.

- D.B.* = Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (1898— ).
- E.V.* = The English versions of 1611 and 1885, when they agree.
- L.O.T.* = S. R. Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament* (ninth edition, 1913).
- LXX* = The Old Testament in Greek (the "Septuagint"), as edited by H. B. Swete.
- M.T.* = The Masoretic Text, the standard Jewish text of the Hebrew Bible.
- P.E.F.* = Palestine Exploration Fund, usually with a reference to one of the *Quarterly Statements*.
- Pesh.* = The Peshitta, the Syriac version of the Old Testament, made perhaps in the first or second century of our era.
- Targ.* = The Targum, a translation of O.T. into Jewish Aramaic, quoted from P. de Lagarde's edition (1872).
- Vulg.* = The Vulgate, St Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin, 383—405 A.D., quoted from the edition of M. Hetzenauer (1906).



# MALACHI

THE <sup>1</sup>burden of the word of the LORD to Israel <sup>1</sup>  
by <sup>2</sup>Malachi.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *oracle*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *my messenger*

CH. I. 1—5. THE PROLOGUE TO THE BOOK. JUDGEMENT  
ON EDMOM.

The general tone of the prophecy of Malachi is stern to Israel beyond all other prophetic books. The head of their offence is stated in the opening verses: they have sinned against a God who loves them. Malachi points to God's judgement on Edom, Israel's oppressor, as a sign of his love towards Israel.

Of the date and historical circumstances of the judgement referred to nothing is certainly known. See the Introduction to this book, § 3, note.

1. *burden*] Marg. Or, *oracle*. Heb. *massā*. See note on Zech. ix. 1; xii. 1.

*to Israel*] It is plain from ii. 11; iii. 4 that the prophecy is addressed to Judah and in particular to Jerusalem. "Israel" is used here in the religious sense; see note on Zech. xii. 1.

*Malachi*] Marg. Or, *my messenger*. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion followed by St Jerome in the Vulgate read a proper name here "Malachias" or "Malachiah," of which Malachi is possibly a shortened form. The Targum however reads a common noun here: "*my messenger*, who is called Ezra the scribe"; and similarly LXX (ἄγγελου αὐτοῦ). The Peshitta reproduces the ambiguity of the Heb. A probable view is that the word *Malachi* is taken from iii. 1, "Behold, I send my messenger" (Heb. *malāchī*), and that it is not a proper name. Further it is possible that in some Heb. MSS *malāchī* ("my messenger") was altered to *malāchō* ("his messenger") when the word was borrowed from iii. 1 to be placed at the head of the prophecy; hence the reading of LXX, ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ, "by the hand of his messenger" (*or* angel). The construction of this clause with the preceding words is awkward, and probably

- <sup>2</sup> I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? <sup>1</sup> Was not Esau Jacob's brother?  
<sup>3</sup> saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Is not Esau...? yet I have loved &c.*

the earlier form of the title was simply "The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel." Thus the prophecy is to be reckoned of anonymous authorship.

LXX adds at the end of the verse, *θέσθε δὴ ἐπὶ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν*, "lay it to heart," words taken apparently from ii. 2. Titles of books are specially liable to expansion in the course of transcription.

2. *Was not Esau Jacob's brother?*] Marg. **Is not Esau...?** This is better, for the reference is to the two peoples and not to their ancestors; cp. ii. 12. *Jacob* is used in the sense of "the people of Israel" in many passages of O.T.; e.g. Num. xxiv. 5; Isa. x. 21; xiv. 1; Obadiah 10.

2, 3. *I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated*] Better, **I love Jacob; but Esau I hate**, the reference being to the prophet's own time, with a glance at the overthrow of Edom which is described in the verse. From the context it is clear that the two peoples, not their two ancestors, are meant here; cp. v. 2, note. JEHOVAH hates the Edomites now, but at an earlier time a different tone towards Edom is heard. Two favourable utterances occur in Deuteronomy: "I (JEHOVAH) have given mount Seir unto Esau...for a possession" (Deut. ii. 5); "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite" (Deut. xxiii. 7). But later there came a great outbreak of Edomite violence against Judah, for when the Chaldeans under Nebuzaradan made havoc of Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 8—10), Edom rejoiced and helped forward the destruction and the slaughter (Obadiah 10—14; Ps. cxxxvii. 7). A final breach was thus made between Judah and Edom.

"Malachi" treats Jacob as JEHOVAH's chosen people, and Edom therefore as a nation rejected by JEHOVAH. The God of Israel *must* (according to ancient thought) hate such an enemy of His people as Edom proved to be.

In Rom. ix. 13 St Paul quotes the sentence at the end of an argument, as a quotation upon a quotation, just after citing Gen. xxv. 23, "The elder shall serve the younger." His argument would be complete without the reference to Malachi, and it cannot be maintained that the words are used as a proof text. They are only an illustration. As they stand in the prophecy they can have only the most distant bearing (if any at all) on the doctrine of Election.

3. *his mountains*] A frequent designation of the land of Edom in O.T. is mount Seir; Gen. xxxvi. 8; Deut. ii. 5; Ezek.

heritage to the jackals of the wilderness. <sup>1</sup>Whereas <sup>4</sup>Edom saith, We are <sup>2</sup>beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down: and men shall call them The border of wickedness, and The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. And <sup>5</sup>your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD <sup>3</sup>be magnified <sup>4</sup>beyond the border of Israel.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Though Edom say*  
*ished*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *is great*

<sup>2</sup> Or, as otherwise read, *impover-*

<sup>4</sup> Or, *over*

xxxv. 2—4. Perhaps **his hill-country** would be a better rendering, for the Heb. *hār*, "mountain" or "hill," does not suggest barren or uncultivated land. Similar expressions are "mount Ephraim" ("the hill country of E.," Jud. xvii. 1, 8, R.V.) for the whole territory of Ephraim, and, "the hill country of Judah," Josh. xi. 21, R.V.

*a desolation*] Cp. Ezek. xxxv. 7; Joel iii. 19 [iv. 19, Heb.]; Obadiah 1—10.

*to the jackals*] This rendering is probably correct, but the Heb. word for "jackals" (*tannōth*) is found here only in the feminine, and it has given trouble to translators. LXX ends the verse, *eis δόματα ἐρήμων*, as though the sense were, "I will appoint his heritage to be gifts to the wilderness," i.e. to become wilderness-land. But the reference is no doubt to the lairs in which the female jackals suckle their cubs; cp. Isa. xxxv. 7, "In the habitation of jackals, where each (feminine) lay."

4. *We are beaten down*] Or, as otherwise read, *impoverished*. The two renderings are taken from the same Heb. consonantal text, but read with different vowels. The marg. agrees with Targ. and other Jewish authorities; only these give a slightly different turn to the expression, "We were formerly impoverished, but now we have become rich again, and we will return," etc.

*The border of wickedness*] i.e. The land of wickedness. "Border" is used for that which is enclosed by a border.

*hath indignation*] The same Heb. word is used Zech. i. 12.

5. *your eyes shall see, and ye etc.*] Better, **your own eyes shall see, and ye yourselves shall say**. The emphasis is missed in E.V.

*be magnified*] Rather, **shall be magnified** by the worship predicted in v. 11.

*beyond the border of Israel*] Targ. (paraphrastically), "Because he hath enlarged the border of Israel" (so Lagarde's text). The majesty of JEHOVAH will be displayed beyond His own land. Cp. v. 11.

- 6 A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye  
7 say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar. And ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of

#### 6—14. SIN IN SACRIFICE.

The sin complained of is one in which both priest and people share, but the priests are directly addressed (*v.* 6), because as instructors of the people they are largely responsible for the misdeeds of the people. The Mosaic Law required animals without blemish for victims, but in Malachi's day the people broke the law with the connivance (or even with the approval) of the priests. So greatly did this evil prevail that the Prophet suggests that it would be better if the sacrifices ceased altogether. Further to goad his hearers to amendment he declares that truly pure offerings are soon to be offered in other places than the Sanctuary of Jerusalem. The Gentiles have already heard JEHOVAH's name and they will reverence it more truly.

6. *A son honoureth his father*, etc.] Better, **A son shall honour his father**, etc. The words are a quotation of a common statement of duty based on the fifth commandment. The passage implies that JEHOVAH is the Father of Israel. In O.T. God is called "our Father," as the Maker, Redeemer, and Governor of His people; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Isa. lxiii. 16; lxiv. 8; cp. Hos. xi. 1. In Ps. lxxxix. 26 f. the Davidic king calls JEHOVAH his Father.

*my fear*] i.e. the reverence due to me; cp. Gen. ix. 2; Rom. xiii. 7.

*O priests*] Cp. ii. 1 ff.; iii. 3.

*that despise my name*] A periphrasis for "that despise me." There is a Jewish saying "He is His name, and His name is He." Cp. Zech. xiii. 2, note.

7. *polluted bread*] "Bread" is used here in the sense of any food including flesh which was offered in sacrifice; cp. Lev. iii. 10, 11. LXX ἀρτους ἡλισγημένους, "polluted loaves." The victim is "polluted," when it has a "blemish" (see Deut. xv. 21).

*have we polluted thee?*] So Peshitta and Targum (ed. Lagarde), but LXX ἡλισγήσαμεν αὐτούς (i.e. τοὺς ἀρτους); "did we pollute them?" (i.e. the loaves). There is no question of a various reading but the expression was felt to be too bold—almost blasphemous. Cp. ver. 13, note.

*the table of the LORD*] LXX τράπεζα Κυρίου (cp. 1 Cor. x. 21). This designation of an altar as a *table* is comparatively rare

the LORD is contemptible. And when ye offer the blind 8  
for sacrifice, it is no evil! and when ye offer the lame  
and sick, it is no evil! Present it now unto thy governor;  
will he be pleased with thee? or will he accept thy person?  
saith the LORD of hosts. And now, I pray you, intreat 9  
the favour of God, that he may be gracious unto us:  
this hath been <sup>1</sup>by your means: will he <sup>2</sup>accept any  
of your persons? saith the LORD of hosts. Oh that 10  
there were one among you that would shut the doors,  
that ye might not kindle *fire on* mine altar in vain!  
I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts,  
neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For 11  
from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of  
the same my name <sup>3</sup>is great among the Gentiles; and  
in every place <sup>4</sup>incense is offered unto my name,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *from your hand*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *accept any because of you*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *shall be*

<sup>4</sup> Or, *incense and a pure oblation are offered*

in O.T.; cp. Ezek. xliv. 15, 16. The term "table" suggests  
that the thing sacrificed was regarded as the food of the deity,  
a notion from which the prophets and their followers usually  
shrank in horror; cp. Ps. l. 12, 13; Isa. i. 11.

*contemptible*] Or, *despicable*.

8. *governor*] Heb. *pehah* (*pahath*, plural *pahoth*). A word  
applied to governors of the provinces of the Persian empire;  
see note on Hag. i. 1.

*be pleased with thee*] In the East the inferior seeks the favour  
of his superior by offering a gift, and the acceptance of the gift  
is a sign of reception into favour. See Gen. xxxiii. 8—10;  
xliii. 11—14.

9. *And now* etc.] The Prophet challenges the priests to  
intercede for the people, successfully if they can; cp. Joel ii. 17.

*this hath been by your means*] If this translation be right,  
the meaning is that a curse has come upon the land through  
the misconduct of the priests; cp. ii. 2*b*. Another possible  
translation is, *Thus hath it been from your hand* (cp. margin),  
i.e. "ye have offered unacceptable offerings to God."

10. *shut the doors*] i.e. close the Temple for worship. Cp.  
2 Chron. xxviii. 24; xxix. 3.

11. *is great*] Not, *shall be great* (margin). The Prophet  
bases his prediction that worship shall be paid to JEHOVAH  
among the Gentiles on the observed fact that JEHOVAH's name is  
already revered among them; cp. the end of this verse and v. 14.

*and in every place...pure offering*] Rather, **and in every place**

and a pure offering: for my name <sup>1</sup>is great among the  
 12 Gentiles, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye profane it,  
 in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted, and  
 13 the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Ye  
 say also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have  
 snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye have  
 brought that which was taken by violence, and the lame,  
 and the sick; thus ye bring the offering: should I  
 14 accept this of your hand? saith the LORD. But cursed  
 be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *shall be*

incense shall be burnt, offerings shall be brought to my name, yea, a pure oblation. The original Hebrew is brief and somewhat enigmatic; we might render, *sacrifices shall smoke, offerings shall be brought*. The two verbs are participles, and according to Hebrew idiom they may be translated as futures, "sacrifices are about to smoke, offerings are about to be brought" (*muktār muggāsh*). The Prophet like Zechariah (viii. 20 ff.) looks to a great gathering of proselytes to the religion of the one God, but (unlike Zechariah) he does not connect their worship with Jerusalem.

12. *ye profane it*] i.e. "my name"; cp. Ezek. xxxvi. 22.

*is polluted*] The Prophet paraphrases with his own term ("pollute") the words which the priests themselves use in accepting offerings of blind, lame, and sick victims.

*and the fruit thereof, etc.*] The word for "fruit" is uncertain and possibly the original reading was simply, *and his meat* ("food") *is contemptible*.

13. *a weariness*] Cp. iii. 14.

*ye have snuffed at it*] If the reading is correct, the meaning is, "Ye have despised the table of the LORD and that which is on it." On the other hand this passage is reckoned by several Jewish authorities (Rashi the commentator, and certain Midrashic and Masoretic works) to belong to the list of *Tikkun Sophërim*. These passages are commonly said to have been "corrected by the scribes" presumably for the sake of reverence; cp. note on Zech. ii. 8. In the present instance the original reading is said to have been, "Ye have snuffed at me" (JEHOVAH). The difference is slight in Heb. MSS; *otho* substituted for *othi*.

*that which was taken by violence*] Such a thing according to the Law (Lev. vi. 2—7 = v. 21—22, Heb.) had to be restored with interest to the owner, and the offender was required to make a guilt offering for his offence. To offer the thing itself to JEHOVAH would be simply an outrage against Him.

14. *a male*] Cp. Lev. xxii. 18, 19.



voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a blemished thing: for I am a great king, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is terrible among the Gentiles.

And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. <sup>2</sup> If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, <sup>2</sup> to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will rebuke <sup>1</sup>the <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to some ancient versions, *your arm*.

*a great king*] The indefinite article spoils the phrase. The Heb. anarthrous words, "Great King," are to be taken almost as a proper name, like βασιλεύς (for the king of Persia) in classical Greek. JEHOVAH is the one Great King high above all governors; cp. ver. 8.

*terrible*] Cp. ver. 11, "great." The thought is rather of the reverence which is expressed in worship, than of the terror following on judgements. LXX ἐπιφανής, "illustrious."

#### CH. II. 1—9. AN ARRAIGNMENT OF THE PRIESTS FOR THEIR UNFAITHFULNESS IN TEACHING.

Here JEHOVAH threatens that unless the priests repent, He will reject first the sacrifices, and then the priesthood itself. The priests have broken the covenant of Levi, and have fallen from the old ideals. Part of their office was to explain the Law, both ritual and moral, to Israel, but they have in fact toned down the demands of that law in order to ingratiate themselves with the people. Punishment has already begun, for the people despise the priests.

<sup>1</sup> *commandment*] Better, **charge**, a more general word.

<sup>2</sup> *to give honour*] The Heb. word is the same as in i. 6. Honour is due to JEHOVAH as to a father.

*the curse*] LXX τὴν κατάραν, i.e. the comprehensive Divine judgement which touches the whole of life. Vulgate, *egestatem*, "want, poverty," agrees with the first words of v. 3, but does not represent the fulness of the Hebrew expression.

*yea, I have cursed them already*] Cp. i. 9, note,

<sup>3</sup> *I will rebuke etc.*] i.e. the seed sown in the fields. This seed which is a potential blessing shall be blasted before it can come to maturity, and so be changed into a curse (cp. ver. 2), the elemental curse of Famine. The corresponding blessing, "I will rebuke the devourer," is given in iii. 11. The objection, "As the priests did not practise agriculture, such a threat would not



seed for your sake, and will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your <sup>1</sup>sacrifices; and ye shall  
 4 be taken away <sup>2</sup>with it. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant  
 5 might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him that he might fear, and he feared me, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *feasts*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *unto*

have any special significance for them," is unsound, for Famine would make no favourable exception for the priests. The suggestion that the text is faulty is gratuitous. LXX gives ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀφορίζω ὑμῖν τὸν ὤμον, "Behold, I separate (put aside) for you the shoulder." Some scholars (e.g. Nowack, Riessler) believe that this rendering of LXX points to a different Heb. reading, "Behold, I will hew off your arm," a threat to the priests that they will be deprived of the power of executing the service which they despised; cp. Zech. xi. 17. This suggestion is ingenious, but far-fetched.

*and will spread etc.*] Rather, **I will scatter** (as with a blast) **your unclean sacrifices in your faces**, i.e. JEHOVAH will utterly reject your sacrifices as unclean. The sacrifice which should bring a blessing, will in fact bring a curse (cp. ver. 2). *Your unclean sacrifices* is more literally "the dung of your sacrifices." When the fat of the sin-offering was burnt upon the altar of burnt offering, the rest of the victim, its flesh, its skin, its inwards, and its *dung*, was taken outside the camp and burnt separately there (Lev. iv. 11 f.). In the present passage *dung* stands for *all parts that are rejected* of the victim, and the mention of only the rejected parts suggests that the sacrifice itself is not accepted.

*ye shall be taken away with it*] As though ye were yourselves refuse.

4. *this commandment*] Rather, **this charge**.

*that my covenant might be etc.*] Rather, **because my covenant was**; literally, "in respect of my covenant being" etc. (This is a rarer use of the Heb. preposition, but it is well established.)

*with Levi*] i.e. with the priestly tribe; cp. the phrase in Deuteronomy, "the priests the Levites" (Deut. xvii. 9; 18; xviii. 1; Josh. iii. 3). LXX πρὸς τοὺς Λευίτας is wrong, if it means the Levites as distinguished from the priests.

5. *of life and peace*] Cp. Num. xxv. 10—13; Jer. xxxiii. 18—22. For the meaning of "a covenant of peace" see Ezek. xxxiv. 25—27.

*I gave them*] i.e. life and peace.

stood in awe of my name. The law of truth was in his 6 mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips 7 should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But ye are turned aside out of the way; ye have 8 caused many to stumble in the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore 9 have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have had respect of persons in the law.

*stood in awe of]* A very strong expression in the Heb.; cp. Isa. lxvi. 2, "him...that *trembleth* at my word." The Prophet by contrast brings into clearest light the irreverence of the priests whom he addresses.

6. *The law of truth]* Rather, **True direction**, or, *True decisions*. Law (Heb. *torah*) as in Hag. ii. 11. Malachi in sketching the character of the priest of an earlier age, no doubt idealizes it, just as Isaiah idealizes the Jerusalem of a former generation in Isa. i. 21, 26. But there surely had been a better age of priestly work than Malachi's own.

*in peace]* i.e. in perfect accord, in whole-hearted submission.

7. *the priest's lips]* The *lips* are mentioned, not the heart, because the knowledge is to be given out, not stored up.

*seek direction at his mouth]* Cp. Zech. vii. 3 ff.

*for he is the messenger]* Or, *angel*; LXX ἄγγελος. Rashi says that the priest is like the *angels of service* who enter within into God's own place. Targum, "For he ministers before the LORD of hosts." But if the reading be correct we must render, "the Angel of the LORD of Hosts." The expression is very bold, but boldness in speech is a characteristic of Malachi; cp. i. 7, 10. The meaning would then be that the priest—the ideal priest—is towards the people as God Himself; cp. Exod. iv. 16.

8. *But ye]* The pronoun is emphatic; "Ye priests, to whom I speak."

*in the law]* In the course of your teaching.

*ye have corrupted]* LXX διεφθείρατε. The verb in Heb. (as in Greek) is ambiguous: we might translate, "Ye have destroyed."

9. *Therefore have I also]* Rabbi D. Kimkhi's comment is, "Measure for measure (*middāh kēneged middāh*). Ye despise me and I will make you despised."

*in the law]* i.e. in judgement. By the Deuteronomic law

- 10 Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?  
 11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath

"the priests the Levites" [at Jerusalem] were appointed to decide appeals on matters too hard to be settled by local tribunals (Deut. xvii. 8—13; xxiv. 8). Cases of all kinds came before them, for there was no sharp line of distinction between the civil and the religious in Israel.

10—16. DENUNCIATION OF FOREIGN MARRIAGES, OF ILL-TREATMENT OF WIVES, AND OF SYNCRETIC WORSHIP.

The Prophet rebukes his people for putting away Jewish wives and marrying foreign women. Such action, he says, is treachery against the kin of the Jewish wife (*v.* 10), and indeed against JEHOVAH Himself (*v.* 11). JEHOVAH will cut off the descendants of such sinners (*v.* 12); their present prayers and fastings are only an additional offence (*v.* 13). JEHOVAH has noted their breach of covenant (*v.* 14); they have annulled his purpose in the institution of marriage (*v.* 15). They have added hatred and violence to their original fault; let them beware (*v.* 16).

10. *Have we not...created us?*] The two questions are transposed in LXX, probably through a feeling of reverence. But the one Father and the one God are the same in the Prophet's thought; cp. i. 6. God is Israel's Father; cp. Jer. xxxi. 9; Hosea xi. 1. *why do we deal treacherously every man* etc.] Rather, **Why hath every man dealt treacherously** etc. The offence of which the Prophet speaks is clearly defined in the next verse as marriage with foreign women. No absolute prohibition of such marriages is found in the Pentateuch. But (1) Deut. vii. 3 forbids all intermarriage with the seven nations of Canaan; (2) Deut. xxiii. 2, 3 imposes all but permanent disabilities on persons of Ammonite or Moabite descent; (3) Deut. xxiii. 7, 8 excludes a man of Edomite or Egyptian descent from the congregation until the third generation. Steps were taken by Ezra and by Nehemiah to enforce these restrictions (Ezra ix. x; Neh. xiii. 1—3; 23—27). On the other hand Deut. xxi. 10—13 expressly allows an Israelite to marry a foreign captive woman.

The LXX puts this whole verse into the second person; cp. *v.* 13 f.

11. *in Israel*] i.e. among the "unlettered laymen" throughout Judah, while the phrase *in Jerusalem* suggests that the same offence is committed by the better instructed inhabitants of the capital and even by the priests. See Ezra x. 18, 23, 25.

profaned the <sup>1</sup>holiness of the LORD which he loveth, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The <sup>12</sup>LORD will cut off to the man that doeth this him that waketh and him that answereth, out of the tents of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts. And this <sup>2</sup>again ye do: ye cover the altar of the LORD <sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sanctuary*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *a second time*

*the holiness of the LORD*] Holiness is used in a concrete sense; probably it is short for the phrase, *holy seed*, lit. *the seed of holiness* (Ezra ix. 2), which is a title of the chosen people; cp. Jer. ii. 3 ("Israel was holiness to the LORD"). The general sense is that the Jews have despised the position of privilege assigned to them—the position of being "holy" or "separate" (Lev. xx. 24) to JEHOVAH—and have joined themselves to foreign women and (through them) to foreign gods (cp. 1 Kings xi. 4).

*and hath married*] Rather, **and marrieth**. The tense is frequentative; the Prophet complains of a corrupt practice.

*the daughter of a strange god*] The phrase is a striking one, for it combines in itself the two phrases:

"daughter of a foreign man,"  
and "worshipper of a foreign god."

Both these descriptions apply to the foreign wives of Jewish husbands to whom Malachi refers. The foreign women and the worship of foreign gods would enter the Jewish household together, as in the case of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 1—8). The LXX by a bold paraphrase gives ἐπετῆρδευσεν εἰς θεοὺς ἄλλοτρίους, "devoted himself to foreign gods" for "hath married the daughter of a strange god."

12. *The LORD will cut off to the man etc.*] The general sense of this verse is clear: JEHOVAH will destroy the males of the household of the man who profanes the holiness of JEHOVAH by marrying a foreign woman. His household will have no man left as head over it to perform the duty of sacrifice. But the meaning of the clause, *him that waketh and him that answereth* (a literal rendering of M.T.) is doubtful. A.V., *the master and the scholar*, following the Vulg. Pesh., Targ. paraphrase, *his son and his son's son*. LXX (reading the Heb. consonants differently) ἕως καὶ ταπεινωθῇ, "until he be brought low!"

13. *And this again*] Or, *And this, a second thing*. LXX καὶ τὰῦτα ἃ ἐμίσουν, ἐποιεῖτε, "and these things which I hate ye were doing," following a slightly different reading of the Hebrew.

*ye cover the altar...with tears*] Weeping stands for all the practices which go to make up a day of fasting and humiliation: cp. Zech. vii. 3, note. The prophets teach in many passages

with tears, with weeping, and with sighing, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, neither  
 14 receiveth it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, though she is thy companion,

that great fasts unaccompanied by amendment of life and the practice of works of mercy are not pleasing but rather specially repugnant to JEHOVAH.

*insomuch that he regardeth not*] Rather, **because he regardeth not**. The Hebrew particle (*mē'ēn*) is causal as in Isa. l. 2 ("their fish stinketh, *because* there is no water"); Jer. vii. 32 ("they shall bury in Tophet, *because* there is no room elsewhere"); Jer. xix. 11. The contemporaries of Malachi make great show of fasting, *because* they find that the ordinary daily offering is not accepted, for JEHOVAH has sent the curse upon them. See v. 2; i. 9, note ("this hath been by your means").

14. *hath been witness*] The offenders to whom the Prophet speaks have already been tried for their offence, and are already beginning to suffer the appointed punishment. JEHOVAH Himself has been Judge and also Witness, for the wrongs suffered by the wife in the privacy of the home, though known in general to others, can be fully witnessed to only by the all-seeing God.

*the wife of thy youth*] i.e. a wife married when the husband was young. The treacherous dealing consists in the divorce of such a wife; cp. ver. 16. Divorce was permitted, or rather *regulated*, by the Deuteronomic Law. There is nothing in this law to encourage divorce or to suggest that it may be done "for any cause." One case only is dealt with, i.e. the case in which the husband *finds out* some fault or defect in his wife, after he has married her. It is assumed (Deut. xxiv. 1—4) that if the cause be serious enough, the husband will divorce the wife. It is at this point that the Deuteronomic Law speaks. It lays down regulations. *First*, the divorce must be formally carried out. A document must be written, and delivered into the wife's hand. *Secondly*, the divorce once executed could not be revoked; a husband could not divorce his wife and take her back again at his pleasure. The "bill of divorcement" offered legal security for the return of the wife's dowry. The general tendency of this legislation is to put a check on the husband, and Malachi in denouncing divorce is certainly acting in accordance with the spirit of the Law.

*companion*] Or, *partner*. The Heb. root suggests a compact; cp. 2 Chron. xx. 35, "did *join himself with* (lit. made himself a companion of) Ahaziah"

and the wife of thy covenant. <sup>1</sup>And did he not <sup>15</sup> make one, although he had the residue of the spirit? And wherefore one? He sought a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For <sup>2</sup>I hate putting <sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *And not one hath done so who had a residue of the spirit. Or what? is there one that seeketh a godly seed?* <sup>2</sup> Heb. *he hateth.*

*covenant]* The marriage covenant was made *with* the father or brother on behalf of the bride (Gen. xxiv. 50—54).

15. *And did he not...spirit?]* **And did he not appoint them** (man and wife) **to be one, and give them a residue of living breath?** The substance is rugged like other utterances of Malachi, but there is no sufficient reason for counting the text corrupt. The Prophet refers to the creation of mankind in *v.* 10, and he returns to the subject here. He made man and woman one in marriage (cp. Gen. ii. 24), and gave them the power of passing on the breath of life to the residue of the human race which came after them.

*And wherefore one...godly seed.]* Rather, **And what seeketh the one** (i.e. the husband and wife considered as a unity)? **It seeketh a divine seed.** The wedded pair seek to transmit to descendants the living breath which God breathed into the first man.

*Therefore etc.]* The destiny of married life being so great (see last note) let no husband deal unfairly with his partner in marriage. Let him do her no kind of injustice (cp. Deut. xxi. 15—17).

*take heed to your spirit]* i.e. take heed, for your breath (your life) is at stake.

*let none deal...of his youth]* An impossible translation, though supported by Peshitta. Rather, **let none deal treacherously with the wife of thy youth.** The prohibition is comprehensive, "Neither deal treacherously thyself, nor allow others (e.g. the children of the other wife) to deal treacherously for thee." An inferior reading is found in a few MSS of Kennicott and de Rossi, *deal not treacherously.* This reading becomes still weaker in the LXX, *μὴ ἐγκαταλίπης*, "do not forsake," for the Heb. verb is used to express active as well as passive injustice.

16. *I hate putting away]* An impossible translation. Rather, **he** (Judah, as in *v.* 11) **hath put away with hatred**, literally, "he hath hated (so as) to put away," i.e. he hath hated and divorced. (For the construction of the Hebrew see Gen. ii. 3.) The crime is in the feeling of hatred as well as in the outward act of divorce. Divorce was permitted by the Law, hatred was not! See Deut. xxi. 15 ff.



away, saith the LORD, the God of Israel, and him that covereth his garment with violence, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

- 17 Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? In that ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or where is the God of judgement? Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom

*and him that covereth etc.] and he covereth his garment with violence*, i.e. carries out his injustice against her who is as near to him as his garment.

#### 17—III. 6. JEHOVAH'S DAY OF JUDGEMENT IN HIS TEMPLE.

In answer to the unbelief of the people the Prophet declares that the Judgement of JEHOVAH (doubted by many) is in fact near at hand. The Angel of the covenant, i.e. the Angel of JEHOVAH who gave Israel statutes and judgements in Horeb (ch. iv. 4), is about to come to the Temple. Judgement will begin at the house of God (Ezek. ix. 6; 1 Pet. iv. 17), an awful judgement, as by fire. The priests (the sons of Levi) will be purified first; then all sinners will have their sins brought home to them. The God who gave Israel a covenant of holiness has not changed his character.

17. *Ye have wearied the Lord]* The same Heb. verb is used in Isa. xliii. 24, "Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities."

*Every one that doeth evil etc.]* The complaint is that the wicked prosper and that the Most High gives no sign that they will receive punishment. Cp. Job xxi. 7—15.

*where is the God of judgement?]* Cp. 2 Pet. iii. 4.

#### CH. III.

1. *my messenger]* Heb. *malāchī*, LXX τὸν ἄγγελόν μου. See i. 1, note.

*prepare the way]* The same Heb. phrase as in Isa. xl. 3.

*the Lord]* The Heb. word used here is not the tetragrammaton, the sacred name JEHOVAH, nor is it *Adonai* the form which is usually substituted for it in reading, but the rare *ha-Adōn* (the literal equivalent of "the Lord") which is occasionally used prefixed to JEHOVAH as in Exod. xxiii. 17; Isa. i. 24.

*whom ye seek]* A reference to the people's own words quoted in ii. 17, "Where is the God of judgement?"



ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; <sup>1</sup>and the <sup>2</sup>messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold, he cometh, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide <sup>2</sup>the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, <sup>3</sup>and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto the LORD offerings in righteousness. Then shall the offering of <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *even*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *angel*

*shall suddenly come to his temple]* Or, *shall suddenly enter into his temple.* The Prophet's meaning is illustrated by Isaiah's vision of Divine judgement (Isa. vi.). The son of Amoz saw JEHOVAH seated on his throne in the Temple and heard him pronounce a sentence of desolation and depopulation against the land of Judah. The Hebrew word *hēychāl*, "temple," used here and in Isa. vi. 1, might be almost equally well rendered "palace," since in both passages JEHOVAH is represented in His character as king and judge.

*even the messenger of the covenant]* The sense is that a manifestation of JEHOVAH is about to be made similar to that of the day of the giving of the covenant on Sinai (Exod. xix., xx.). The "Angel of the covenant" is an appearance of JEHOVAH in the character of Israel's covenant-god.

*whom ye delight in]* The contemporaries of Malachi like those of Amos (see Amos v. 18) professed to desire to see JEHOVAH coming in judgement.

<sup>2</sup>. *who shall stand]* Cp. Ps. cxxx. 3; and Rev. xx. 11, "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away."

*he is like a refiner's fire]* **It** (the day) **is like**, etc. Cp. iv. 1. *soap]* Heb. *bōrīth*, properly an alkali obtained from species of *Salsola* and *Salicornia* abundant on salt marshes and on the shores of the Dead Sea, where the Arabs still collect these plants and burn them for potash. This potash is mixed with boiled oil and so made into soap. Olive oil is one of the commonest products of Palestine, but only second class oil is used in this manufacture, the better class being used for food. Soap (as well as oil) is exported to Egypt at the present day from Palestine (see *P.E.F. Statement* for 1903, pages 338—9).

<sup>3</sup>. *the sons of Levi]* The judgement begins with the priests; cp. i. 6.

*and purge them]* The wicked among them will be purged away.

*and they shall offer etc.]* Rather, **that the LORD may have priests who bring offerings in righteousness.**

Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in  
 5 the days of old, and as in ancient years. And I will  
 come near to you to judgement; and I will be a swift  
 witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers,  
 and against false swearers; and against those that  
 oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the  
 fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his*  
 6 *right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. For  
 I the LORD change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob,  
 are not consumed.

4. *be pleasant*] Or, *be sweet*; cp. Ps. civ. 34 (same Heb. word).  
*as in the days of old*] When Solomon's temple was still standing  
 and righteous kings reigned in Jerusalem.

5. *a swift witness*] The contemporaries of Malachi were satisfied  
 with themselves. It was necessary that their sins should be  
 first brought home to them before punishment was inflicted.  
 JEHOVAH the all-seeing will be witness, and will not delay His  
 coming.

*against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers*] Sorcery was  
 (and is) used by would-be murderers and adulterers as a supposed  
 aid to the attainment of their desires. It is therefore fitting  
 that sorcerers should be associated here with offenders against  
 the moral law.

*oppress the hireling in his wages*] The reference is chiefly to  
 the practice of holding back the daily wage (see Deut. xxiv. 15)  
 instead of paying it at the close of the day (see Matt. xx. 8).  
 The object of the employer was probably to ensure the continuous  
 attendance of the labourer from day to day, but the practice  
 was likely to inflict unnecessary hardship on the wage-earner  
 and perhaps to drive him to the money-lender. Field work in  
 Palestine on a rocky soil and under a burning sun (Matt. xx. 12)  
 is very heavy.

*the stranger from his right*] See Zech. vii. 10, note.

*and fear not me*] i.e. fear me not as the Vindicator of Right;  
 cp. Lev. xix. 14; Pro. iii. 7; *al*.

6. *I the LORD change not*] JEHOVAH remembers His covenant  
 (cp. v. 1) in both its aspects: on the one hand His moral law  
 remains valid, and Judah (Jacob) suffers in the present for offences  
 against it, and will have to submit to a future judgement also;  
 on the other hand JEHOVAH's covenant and promise to be the  
 God of Jacob still stands, and Jacob, although chastised, is  
 not destroyed. LXX paraphrases happily, ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ θεὸς  
 ὑμῶν καὶ οὐκ ἡλλοίωμαι, "I am the LORD your God, and I have  
 not changed."

*therefore ye*] Rather, **and ye** (emphatic). LXX attaches this

From the days of your fathers ye have turned aside 7  
from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return  
unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD  
of hosts. But ye say, Wherein shall we return? Will 8  
a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein

second clause to *v.* 7, καὶ ὑμεῖς, υἱοὶ Ἰακώβ, οὐκ ἀπέχεσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀδικιῶν τῶν πατέρων ὑμῶν, "and ye, O sons of Jacob, do not abstain from the iniquities of your fathers," etc. (reading "iniquities" for "days" in *v.* 7). The clause is understood in a similar sense by van Hoonacker, who translates, "et vous autres, fils de Jacob, n'avez point eu de cesse," and explains, "vous n'avez point mis fin à vos abus," reading the Heb. verb as *killēthem* (Piel).

7—12. A CALL TO REPENTANCE AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE  
PAYMENT OF TITHE HELD BACK. A PROMISE.

The Prophet calls upon his people to keep the ordinances of God, which they had neglected. They have defrauded Him of the appointed tithes and offerings (cp. Neh. xiii. 10 ff.). They are cursed with scarcity, but if they will give God His own, they shall be blessed with plenty, so that all nations shall pronounce them happy.

7. *From the days of your fathers*] Cp. Zech. i. 4.  
*ye have turned aside from mine ordinances*] An ordinance (Heb. *hōq*) is a term applied to a prescribed limit, or boundary (Jer. v. 22; Micah vii. 11). The Prophet's words therefore suggest the metaphor of taking a false turn, though the true way is marked out.

*Return unto me, etc.*] The same appeal is made in Zech. i. 4.

*I will return*] Cp. Zech. i. 16.

*Wherein shall we return*] The English Version retains the ambiguity of the original. Two paraphrases of the Hebrew are admissible. (1) "*In what manner shall we return to JEHOVAH?*" To this the Prophet's answer would be, "As penitents"; cp. Joel ii. 12, "Turn ye...with fasting and with weeping and with mourning." (2) "*In respect of what sin are we to return (i.e. repent)?*" It is according to this (second) interpretation that the question is taken up and answered in *v.* 8.

8. *Will a man rob God?*] Better, as LXX, μήτι πτερνιεί ἄνθρωπος θεόν; "Shall man trip up (i.e. get the better of) God?" A forcible colloquialism. This passage is reckoned in the Masorah of the codex Babylonicus (preserved at Petrograd) as an instance of *Tikkun Sophërim*; cp. i. 13; Zech. ii. 8, note. The Hebrew verb rendered "rob" (קָבַע) is found only here (*vn.* 8, 9) and in one other passage (Prov. xxii. 23, *his*), and no satisfactory account of it is given in the Lexicons. But if one letter be transposed, the root

9 have we robbed thee? In tithes and <sup>1</sup>offerings. Ye are  
 cursed with the curse; for ye rob me, even this whole  
 10 nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *heave offerings*.

(עקב) is identical with that from which the proper name *Jacob* comes; this root signifies "to trip up" or "to give a fall to" (Gen. xxvii. 36, "*supplanted me*"; Jer. ix. 4 [ix. 3, Heb.], "*will utterly supplant*"). Therefore those who declared the word to be *Tikkun Sophërim* probably meant that the sense was indeed "to trip up," but that the form of the word had been altered for the sake of reverence. It is not becoming to say that man "trips up" God, as Jacob "tripped up" Esau. Still it is in fact "cheating" (cp. i. 7, 8) of which the Prophet complains, not "robbery." Offerings were brought, but they were defective.

*In tithes and offerings*]. **In the tithe and the heave offering.** Tithing of the produce of the field is commanded in Deut. xiv. 22 ff. The tithe when gathered is to be eaten with rejoicing before JEHOVAH in the place of his choice, and it is to be shared with the Levite and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow. The *heave-offering* (Heb. *těvūmah*) is according to its name that portion which is *lifted off* or *separated from* (LXX ἀφαίρεμα in Lev. vii. 14, 34) a larger mass as a *contribution* for the service of the deity (Driver's Exodus, p. 263, *Camb. Bible*). Practically *heave-offering* is equivalent to *first fruits* (LXX τὰς ἀρχὰς τῶν χειρῶν ὑμῶν in Deut. xii. 11). It does not appear that the word signifies that the offering was ceremonially *lifted up* before God. The *wave-offering* which was to be *waved* before JEHOVAH is designated by a different Hebrew word (*těnūphāh*). *Tithe* according to the Deuteronomic law was due every third year; practically therefore it amounted to a *thirtieth*, not a *tenth*, of the income (Deut. xiv. 28; xxvi. 12; cp. Amos iv. 4, A.V.).

9. *Ye are cursed with the curse*] Vulg. *in penuria vos maledicti estis*. Here as in ii. 2 (*q.v.*) St Jerome understands the *curse* (i.e. God's special curse upon a nation) to be scarcity. The words are strong, but not too strong for Malachi; cp. ii. 3, note. The rendering of LXX, ἀποβλέποντες ὑμεῖς ἀποβλέπετε, "Ye, even ye, look away from me" either follows an inferior reading of the Hebrew; or, the translators shrank from the sternness of the Prophet's denunciation.

*ye rob me*] The emphasis is on *me*.

*even this whole nation*] No good rendering of the Prophet's vigorous words is possible in English, but **O Gentiles all** comes near the sense. Malachi addresses Judah as a heathen nation (Heb. *gōi*) throughout; both priests and people fall under the charge.

10. *the whole tithe*] Besides offering the blind and the lame

that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough *to receive it*. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and 11 he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you 12 happy: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

(i. 8), the Jews were paying only a part of the tithe due from them. Both in the quality and in the quantity of their offerings they were found to be offenders.

*that there may be meat in mine house*] The Heb. word used here for "meat" is *teph*, which comes from a root meaning "to tear"; so the adjective *tārāph* is used in the phrase, "a leaf *plucked off*" (Gen. viii. 11). Probably therefore *teph* means here "a portion," something separated from the rest. God is asking for the *tithe*.

*the windows of heaven*] i.e. the "openings" through which God sends rain upon the earth; Gen. vii. 11; viii. 2; 2 Kings vii. 2. In Gen. i. 6—8 heaven is described as a "firmament," a dome stretching out over the earth and separating the upper waters (the rain) from the lower waters (the sea). To enable the upper waters to descend the *windows* of heaven must be opened. We can only guess how far this language is poetic only, or how far it represents the actual popular Hebrew belief at any particular time.

*that there shall not be room enough to receive it*] Literally, *until there be not an Enough* (i.e. a Limit). The phrase seems to be a forcible colloquialism such as we find elsewhere both in Malachi (cp. v. 8, note) and in other prophecies.

11. *I will rebuke etc.*] Cp. ii. 3; Zech. iii. 2; Ps. civ. 7; cvi. 9. JEHOVAH's rebuke stays, baffles, or destroys.

*the devourer*] i.e. the locust or the drought or blasting or mildew or hail, whatever "the devourer" was at this time.

12. *shall call you happy*] The same expression in Hebrew as in v. 15.

*a delightsome land*] The phrase suggests that the Prophet means that Judah shall be a delight to its inhabitants, but it is more probable that Malachi wishes to say that JEHOVAH will take delight in it. Pesh. gives, *a land of my good will*, i.e. *a favoured land*.

- 13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein have we spoken against  
 14 thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his charge, and that we have walked <sup>1</sup>mournfully before the LORD of hosts?  
 15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are built up; yea, they tempt God,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in mourning apparel*

13—IV. 3. THE COMING SEPARATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS FROM THE WICKED ON THE DAY OF JEHOVAH.

Malachi describes the two camps into which his people is divided. There is first the camp of the disloyal, whom he taxes openly with the words which they have spoken together in secret against JEHOVAH (*vv.* 13—15). But there is also a loyal camp of those who fear JEHOVAH. They too have spoken together, taking up the challenge of the disloyal (*v.* 16 *a*; N.B. "Then"). JEHOVAH has noted this action and has written their names for remembrance in a book (*v.* 16 *b*). They will be spared and acknowledged as JEHOVAH's own on the Day which He makes His own (*v.* 17). A difference will indeed be made between the righteous and the wicked, for the presumptuous (*cp.* *vv.* 13—15) will be burnt up, while the righteous shall prosper and enjoy victory (*v.* 18—iv. 3).

13. *Your words have been stout against me!* The Heb. verb ("be stout" or "strong") can be used in a good sense, as in Hag. ii. 4 (three times).

*have we spoken?* Rather, **have we spoken one with another** (the same form of the verb as in *v.* 16).

14. *It is vain to serve God*] The rest of the verse shows that the service referred to is the service of the Temple and the observance of the legal fasts.

*kept his charge*] The phrase may be used either with reference to a special office held under the Mosaic law (Zech. iii. 7) or again in reference to the Mosaic law itself as binding generally upon the Jews (so here).

*we have walked mournfully*] i.e. fasted and behaved as mourners in the hope of propitiating JEHOVAH; *cp.* ii. 13 (note); Zech. vii. 3 (note). LXX ἐπορεύθημεν ἰκέται, "we went as suppliants."

15. *And now we call the proud happy!* **And now** (from henceforth) **we are going to pronounce the presumptuous ones to be happy.** Presumptuous ones are those who defy God and His prophets; *cp.* Ps. xix. 13 (marg.); Jer. xliii. 2.

*are built up*] *Cp.* Jer. xii. 16 (same Heb. word); also Pro. xiv. 1. To be *built up* means to be *granted prosperity*.



and are delivered. Then they that feared the LORD <sup>16</sup> spake one with another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD <sup>17</sup> of hosts, in the day <sup>1</sup>that I <sup>2</sup>do make, *even* a peculiar

<sup>1</sup> Or, *wherein I do make a peculiar treasure*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *do this*

16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake one with another*] Over against the assembly of the wicked there was an assembly of the godly, who took counsel and "prayed against their wickedness."

*and a book of remembrance was written*] LXX καὶ ἔγραψεν βιβλίον (so also Pesh.), i.e. *and one wrote a book*. The writer of a "book of remembrance" would of course be the "remembrancer" or "recorder" (Heb. *mazkîr*), an officer well known to Hebrew history (1 Kings iv. 3, note in *Camb. Bible*). Late Jewish literature mentions such an officer as holding a place in heaven, but we do not know that the idea is as old as the date of Malachi.

*a book of remembrance*] The Heb. word *sēpher*, "book," means any written document, long or short; thus it is used of a *book* of royal chronicles (1 Kings xiv. 19; 29), or again of a *bill* of divorcement, of perhaps a very few lines (Deut. xxiv. 1). If it were of any length it would of course take the form of a *roll* (Jer. xxxvi. 2, 4). The book contained *a list for remembrance of those that feared the Lord*.

*that thought upon his name*] The same Heb. verb as in Ps. xl. 17, "The Lord thinketh upon me." LXX ἐνλαβουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, "that reverence his name," but the Heb. expression has a more general meaning, "not to forget."

17. *they shall be mine...in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure*] American Standard Version, *they shall be mine...even mine own possession*. The Heb. word does not suggest the idea of *preciousness*, but of *possession*. A *peculiar treasure* (R.V. Heb. *sēgullāh*) is not a happy translation; it is due to an attempt to retain the sense of the rendering of A.V. ("my jewels"). The emphatic possessive pronoun, *mine own*, gives the essential meaning of the Hebrew. R.V. and A.S.V. take the generally accepted view that *sēgullāh* refers to the faithful remnant (v. 16), but acc. to the simplest construction of the Hebrew the reference is rather to the day, that day which JEHOVAH makes His own for the carrying out of His great designs. Render therefore, *in the day that I make mine own*.



treasure; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his  
 18 own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and  
 discern between the righteous and the wicked, between  
 4 him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. For,  
 behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and  
 all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be  
 stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up,  
 saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither  
 2 root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name

*I will spare them]* The same Heb. word as in Zech. xi. 5, 6 (*pity*), where see note.

18. *and discern]* Better as LXX ὁψεσθε, "ye shall see," i.e. ye shall see *what* ye shall see of the difference which God will make between the righteous and the wicked. Another of Malachi's curt and pregnant phrases.

The division of chapters at this point is found in LXX and Vulg., and so in E.V., but not in the Hebrew. The Peshitta (codex Ambrosianus) shows no sign of any division of this book either into chapters or into sections. The paragraphs of R.V. (which cut across the division into chapters) are on the whole satisfactory.

#### CH. IV.

1. *the day]* The day promised in iii. 17.

*as a furnace]* A.V. *as an oven*; see Hos. vii. 4, "as an oven heated by a baker." LXX ὡς κλίβανος. The same name (*tannūr*) is applied in modern Palestine to the ovens in which bread is made. A large hole is made in the earth, the sides are plastered, a very fierce fire is made at the bottom with grass or thorns or twigs ("stubble"), and after the removal of the embers flat cakes of bread are stuck against the plastered sides and very quickly cooked. The *Oven* is a figure of fierce heat and swift destruction, the materials used in heating it being quickly consumed. See Hastings' *D.B.*, s.v. *Oven*.

*the proud]* Or, *the presumptuous*; cp. iii. 15. In both places the Greek LXX gives "the strangers, foreigners" (ἄλλοτριούς, ἀλλογενείς) apparently from a different reading of the Hebrew (*zārīm* for *zēdīm*).

*shall burn them up]* The execution of God's great judgements is usually represented by the prophets as a Burning; cp. Isa. iv. 4; xlvii. 14. On the other hand the chief record of such a judgement is the account of Noah's Flood, which is qualified by the promise that a great judgement by water shall not occur again.

shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for <sup>3</sup> they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I <sup>1</sup>do make, saith the LORD of hosts.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *do this*

2. *the sun of righteousness*] The capital "S" with which "Sun" is printed in many editions (not all) of the A.V. is to be rejected. This "sun" does not represent a person, and Origen adapts the passage only, when he says that "the One Word, rising as a sun of righteousness from Judaea sufficed to send forth his rays," etc. (*cont. Celsum*, vi. 79). The same may be said of the use made by other Fathers of this verse.

*healing*] Not "burning."

*in his wings*] Lit. *in her wings* (or *skirts*), "sun" (*shemesh*) being feminine in Hebrew; i.e. with healing following its rise. The darkness is the time for pestilence (Ps. xci. 6).

*ye shall go forth*] i.e. with the light of morning; cp. Ps. civ. 22 f.

*gambol*] So LXX σκιρτήσετε. Vulg. *salielis*. A.V. *ye shall grow up* follows Rashi and Kimkhi, who explain the verb as meaning to grow in size and fatness.

*calves of the stall*] The same Heb. phrase is found in the singular number in 1 Sam. xxviii. 24, "a fatted calf."

3. *ye shall tread down*] The Heb. word suggests the treading of grapes in the making of wine. The metaphor of the winepress is found in Isa. lxiii. 3; Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

*ashes*] Cp. v. 1.

*in the day that I do make*] The rendering of the marg., *do this*, misses the stress which the Prophet lays on the Day of the LORD. Cp. iii. 17.

*saith the LORD of hosts*] A fit conclusion for a prophetic book. See next note.

#### 4—6. THE COLOPHON.

These last three verses stand rather apart from the rest of the book of Malachi; it is indeed possible (as some scholars think) that they are not the Prophet's own words, but rather the appendix of a reader who wishes to enforce the general teaching of the book—Repent before it be too late. But it is more probable that "Malachi" himself is the author, and for two reasons: (1) There is an abrupt vigour in the verses which is after the very manner of the Prophet; (2) the language here as elsewhere in the prophecy shows the influence of the book of Deuteronomy.

- 4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which  
 I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even  
 5 statutes and judgements. Behold, I will send you  
 Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of  
 6 the LORD come. And he shall turn the heart of the  
 fathers <sup>1</sup>to the children, and the heart of the children

<sup>1</sup> Or, *with*

This colophon forms the ending not only of the book of Malachi, but also of the book of the Prophets, major and minor, in the Hebrew Bible as well as in the English Version. So it comes to pass that the last utterance of the Prophets is a threat, and their last word is *curse* (*ban*, Heb. *hērem*). In very early Hebrew MSS and editions an escape is sought for from this ill-omened ending. V. 5 is *repeated* after v. 6, so that the promise of the new Mission of Elijah fittingly closes the collection of Hebrew prophecies. (Similarly the penultimate verse of Isaiah is repeated at the end of the book so that it may not end with the words, "an abhorring unto all flesh.") In one ancient MS (Camb. Univ. Mm. 5. 27. Sephardic, dated "7 Adar 616," i.e. 856 A.D.) the last line of Malachi runs thus:

"the land (the earth). Behold, I will send."

The Heb. equivalent for "with a curse" is supplied in the margin by another hand.

Jewish scruples have left their mark also on the LXX, the text of which has apparently been re-edited from its original form. At first the translators were content to soften the terrible final word (*hērem*, ἀνάθεμα) into the quite general term ἀρδην, "wholly, utterly," but afterwards v. 4 was repeated after v. 6 to make the prophecy end with a charge instead of a threat. The final editorial step was to omit v. 4 from its original position. Thus the LXX now presents vv. 5, 6 (ending ἀρδην) followed by v. 4 (ending δικαιώματα).

4. *Remember ye*] The message of Malachi is throughout a summons to repent and return to the stricter observance of a Law well known to the prophet's audience.

*in Horeb*] Cp. Deut. i. 6; iv. 10; v. 2.

5. *Behold*] The mention of Elijah follows naturally on the mention of Horeb (1 Kings xviii. 17—40; xix. 8).

*Elijah the prophet*] Cp. Deut. xviii. 14—19.

*the great and terrible day of the Lord*] Joel ii. 31 [iii. 4 Heb.].

6. *he shall turn the heart etc.*] i.e. in repentance; Eccus. xlviii. 10.

*to the children...to their fathers*] Rather (as marg.) **with the children...with their fathers**, i.e. the hearts of both fathers and children, that is, the hearts of all. All shall be brought to repentance.

<sup>1</sup>to their fathers; lest I come and smite the <sup>2</sup>earth with a <sup>3</sup>curse.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *with*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *land*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *ban*

*lest I come*] Cp. iii. 1.

*the earth*] Better as marg. **the land**. The judgement is on the Jews only; cp. Introduction, § 4.

*a curse*] Marg. *ban*; Heb. *hērem*. There are four Heb. words rendered "curse" in E.V.: (1) *kēlālāh*, a "curse" or "reviling" spoken by man which may be averted by God's mercy; (2) *mē'ērah* (ii. 2; iii. 9), a Divine "curse" bringing some special punishment with it; (3) *ālāh* (Zech. v. 3) akin to the *mē'ērah*; (4) *hērem* (Zech. xiv. 11), a Divine "ban" which brings utter destruction upon the person or thing banned. Cp. 1 Kings xx. 42, *the man whom I had devoted to destruction* (lit. "the man of my ban"); Isa. xxxiv. 5 (see marg.).

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UNTIL JOHN.

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